

Fruits Basket

TOKYOPOP

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shojo manga
in America!



9

Natsuki Takaya

Fruits Basket™

Volume 9



Natsuki Takaya

Fruits Basket™

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STORY SO FAR...

Hello, I'm Tohru Honda and I have come to know a terrible secret. After the death of my mother, I was living by myself in a tent, when the Sohma family took me in. I soon learned that the Sohma family lives with a curse! Each family member is possessed by the vengeful spirit of an animal from the Chinese Zodiac. Whenever one of them becomes weak or is hugged by a member of the opposite sex, they change into their Zodiac animal!





Tohru Honda

The ever-optimistic hero of our story. An orphan, she now lives in Shigure's house, along with Yuki and Kyo, and is the only person outside of the family who knows the Sohma family's curse.

Yuki Sohma, the Rat

Soft-spoken. Self-esteem issues. At school he's called "Prince Yuki."

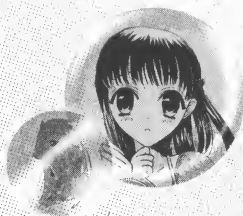


Kyo Sohma, the Cat

The Cat who was left out of the Zodiac. Hates Yuki, leeks and miso. But mostly Yuki.

Kagura Sohma, the Boar

Bashful, yet headstrong. Determined to marry Kyo, even if it kills him.



Fruits Basket Characters

Mabudachi Trio

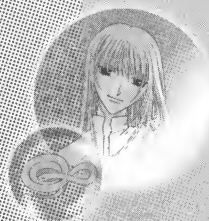


Shigure Sohma, the Dog

Enigmatic, mischievous and a little perverted. A popular novelist.

Hatori Sohma, the Dragon

Family doctor to the Sohmas. Only thing he can't cure is his broken heart.



Ayame Sohma, the Snake

Yuki's older brother. A proud and playful drama queen...er, king. Runs a costume shop.

Saki Hanajima

"Hana-chan." Can sense people's "waves." Goth demeanor scares her classmates.

Arisa Uotani

"Uo-chan." A tough-talking "Yankee" who looks out for her friends.



Tohru's Best Friends

Momiji Sohma, the Rabbit

Half-German. He's older than he looks.
Mother rejected him because of the Sohma curse.



Hatsuharu Sohma, the Ox

The nicest of guys, except when he goes "Black."
Then you'd better watch out.



Kisa Sohma, the Tiger

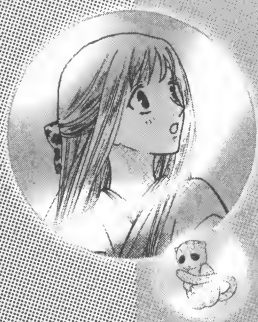
Kisa became shy and self-conscious due to constant teasing by her classmates. Yuki, who has similar insecurities, feels particularly close to Kisa.



Fruits Basket Characters

Hiro Sohma, the Ram (or sheep)

This caustic tyke is skilled at throwing verbal barbs, but he has a soft spot for Kisa.

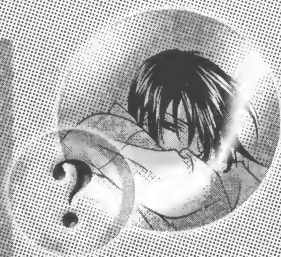


Ritsu Sohma, the Monkey

This shy kimono-wearing member of the Sohma family is gorgeous. But this "she" is really a he!! Crossdressing calms his nerves.

Akito Sohma

The head of the Sohma clan. A dark figure of many secrets. Treated with fear and reverence.



Fruits Basket™

Chapter 49





Filler
sketch

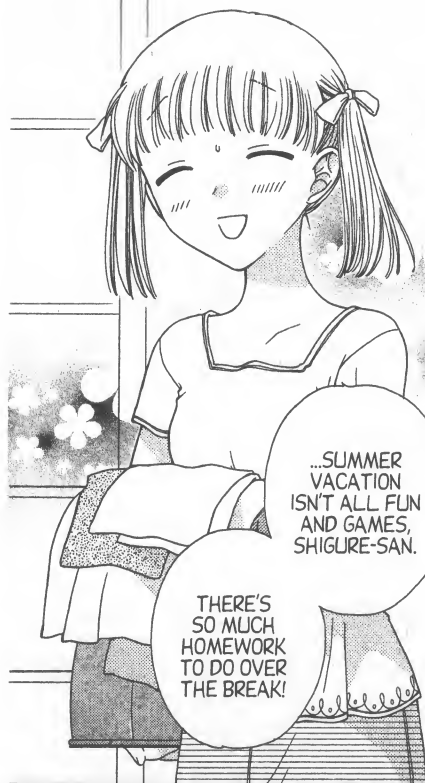


His identity will become clear in Chapter 49. Read on...



BLAH, BLAH, BLAH 1

The title keeps getting shorter and shorter. (Pretty soon there won't be any title left at all.) Finally members of the student council (two of them) make an appearance. There won't be any more of them for a while, though.



...SUMMER
VACATION
ISN'T ALL FUN
AND GAMES,
SHIGURE-SAN.

THERE'S
SO MUCH
HOMEWORK
TO DO OVER
THE BREAK!



YOU'RE NOT
MAKING ANY
SENSE...

NO, NO, IT'S NOT THE
SAME. MY LAZY SUMMER
DAYS BRING WITH THEM
NONE OF THE BLISSFUL
CONNOTATIONS OF TRUE
"SUMMER VACATION,"
RECOGNIZED BY YOUTH
THROUGHOUT THE
WORLD.

sigh...

IT'LL MAKE ALL
TOO MUCH SENSE
WHEN YOU BE-
COME A MEMBER
OF SOCIETY.

BUT...



I-
I COULD
NEVER DO
THAT!!

GIMME A
BREAK!

IF YOU'RE
SO WORRIED,
TOHRU-KUN, LET
ME GIVE YOU
SOME LOVING
ADVICE.



JUST COPY
THE FLAWLESS
PRODIGY YUKI-
KUN'S HOMEWORK
AND BE DONE
WITH IT.

SO MUCH
THAT I DON'T
KNOW IF
I'LL EVER
BE ABLE TO
FINISH IT.

I'LL
DO MY
BEST...



I THOUGHT
I TOLD YOU,
STOP CALLING
ME STUPID!!

BUT
I SUPPOSE
STUPID IS
AS STUPID
DOES.



AH, Y--

YOU
TWO!!

WHY,
YOU!!

カ
バ
ッ

See?

HE'S NOT
DEAD.

IF YOU'RE GONNA
COME AT ME, DO IT
FROM THE FRONT,
YOU COWARD!!

IF YOU
WEREN'T
SO STUPID,
MAYBE
YOU COULD
SENSE ME
COMING.

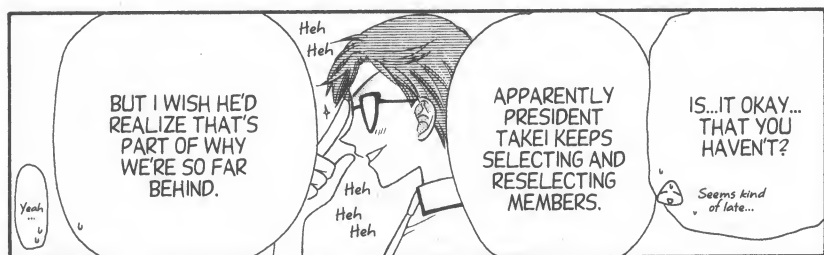


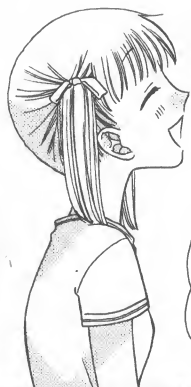
Steaming hot

YOU STOP
SWINGING
THAT THING
AROUND!!

PLEASE,
YOU HAVE
TO STOP
FIGHTING!!







WELL
THEN, I'LL
BE BACK IN
TIME FOR
DINNER.

clack

YES!

TAKE
CARE!

I'M OFF.

UH...STILL
DON'T KNOW
WHAT YOU'RE
TALKING
ABOUT.

WOULDN'T IT
BE NICE IF YOUR
FRIENDSHIP
WERE TO, SAY...
DEEPEN?

Ooh, I'm
excited!



shut



AT LEAST
THIS SUMMER
WON'T BE A
COMPLETE
BUST.

I CAN STILL
BE HAPPY
WATCHING THE
SOAP OPERA
UNFOLD.

WHAT
ARE YOU
TALKING
ABOUT?





My
God,--
man,
you're
dense
!!

YOU'RE AS
DENSE AS AN
OGRE! DENSE AS
LEAD! IF A
TACK IS SHARP,
YOU'RE THE THING
FARTHEST
FROM IT!

A MAN LIKE YOU HAS
NO RIGHT TO HAVE
SUMMER! PACK YOUR
BAGS AND LEAVE THIS
PLACE AT ONCE!

WHAT
THE HELL
ARE YOU
TALKING
ABOUT?!

THE FACT
THAT YOU STILL
DON'T UNDER-
STAND AFTER
I'VE MADE IT SO
CRYSTAL CLEAR
IS PROOF THAT
YOU'RE AN
IDIOT OF THE
HIGHEST ORDER!



Wh-

WHAT'S THE
MATTER?!



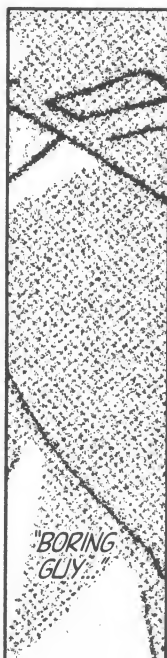
AT LEAST
I GET THAT
I'M **REALLY**
BEING MADE
FUN OF!

You
sorrow...

You
mustn't
get near
him!

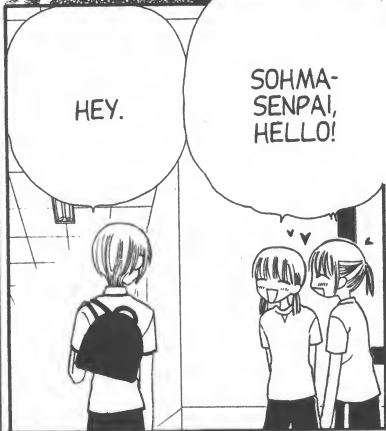
TOHRU-KUN,
IT'S NO USE!
KYO-KUN IS
WASTED
ON YOU.

UNLIKE ME,
HE SHOWS
NO PROMISE
WHATSOEVER!



"BORING
GLY."









CLACK



WHO IS SHE?

IT'S
LIKE SHE'S
JUST GONE
BERSERK.

AH...



I'LL
CLEAN
IT UP.

I'M SORRY.



I'M FINE.



WAIT...

カッ
カッ
カッ

ARE YOU
SURE YOU'RE
FEELING...

...ALL
RIGHT?



MANABE!



WHAT'S
GOING ON?



...A
SECOND.

Fruits Basket 9
Part 1

Hajimemashite
and konnichiwa!
Takaya
reporting for
duty, here to
present *Furuba*
volume 9!
This makes
21 volumes of
manga that
I've produced to
date. (It doesn't
feel so special
anymore.)
Volume 9
features "the
King." Yup!
It's Ayame.
And now the
Mabudachi Trio
have all had
their moment
in the spotlight.
Mabudachi
fans, please
line up volumes
4, 7, and 9.
I guess no one
really does that...
Anyway, please
enjoy volume 9.





Argh! What a mess!!

MACHI!! YOU DID IT AGAIN, DIDN'T YOU?!

HURRY UP AND CLEAN UP THIS MESS!




WHY DIDN'T YOU WAKE ME UP SOONER? NOW HE KNOWS I WAS SLACKING!

NO, THAT'S NOT TRUE! I WASN'T SLACKING. I'M INNOCENT!

I WAS MERELY MEDITATING.





PEOPLE CALL
ME DIFFERENT
THINGS, LIKE
MANABE OR
MANABE-KUN
OR NABE-KUN OR
KAKERU OR
"HEY YOU."

KAKERU
MANABE!!

I'M KAKERU!!
IT'S WRITTEN,
"THE TRUE POT
FLIES."*

*He's explaining how to spell his
name (in kanji. His surname is "ma"
(true) "nabe" (pot), and his given
name is "kakeru" (to fly).

WELL,
CALL BY ME
WHATEVER
SUITS YOU!

I WOULD
RECOMMEND
"SHOU" *
MYSELF.

No one's called
me that yet!

* "Shou" is another way to pronounce the kanji character that makes up his name.

OH! OH
YEAH!!

THE GIRL
OVER THERE
IS A FIRST
YEAR. HER
NAME'S MACHI
KURAGI! SO...

BY THE
WAY, I'M
IN CLASS
2-A!

UM...

Aah!

NO WORRIES,
I KNOW YOU
EVEN WITHOUT
AN INTRODU-
TION! YOU'RE
YUKI SOHMA!





I'M THE VICE
PRESIDENT!



AND SHE
HAS BEEN
OFFICIALLY
APPOINTED
TREASURER!

SO WE'RE THE
ONES WHO'LL
BE WORKING FOR
YOU AS SOON AS
YOU'RE SWORN
IN AS THE NEW
STUDENT BODY
PRESIDENT!



COULD
THESE
TWO
BE...?

YEAH,
THEY'VE
GOT
TO BE.


MANABE.

YOU HAVEN'T
TOLD HIM
THAT WE'RE IN
THE STUDENT
COUNCIL.


AH! RIGHT,
RIGHT!



grab



NOW, THERE'S
JUST ONE
QUESTION I'VE
BEEN DYING TO
ASK YOU!



IS THIS
GOING TO BE
OKAY...?!

AND SO...

...I'M GOING TO
SLEEP, SO I'LL
LEAVE THE REST
TO YOU!

HEY!
I THOUGHT
YOU HAD
A...

YOU'RE IN GOOD
HANDS, MR.
PRESIDENT! WE'RE
AT YOUR BECK AND
CALL, SO DON'T
HESITATE TO CALL
ON US FOR ANY
REASON!

HE'S OBLIVIOUS TO
THE FACT THAT
HIS WORDS AND
ACTIONS GRATE ON
OTHERS...

THIS MANNER
THAT CAUSES
EVERY FIBER
OF MY BEING TO
SCREAM OUT IN
REJECTION...

THERE'S
SOME-
THING
ABOUT
HIM...

SOMETHING
ABOUT
MANABE'S
MANNER THAT
REMINDS ME
OF SOMEONE.

Ha
ha
ha!



AGH! HE'S
JUST LIKE
HIM!!

snore

Ha!

Ha!

Ha!

Ha!

Ha!

Ha!

Ha!

I PRESUME
YOU'VE
FINISHED THE
INTRODUCTIONS?!

Salut!

OHH!!

WHAT
ARE YOUR
IMPRESSIONS,
YUKI-KUN?!

YOU, TOO,
MANABE-KUN,
KURAGI-KUN!!

MY, MY, YOU
SEEM TO BE DOING
EXCEEDINGLY
WELL, YUKI-KUN!
MY APOLOGIES FOR
BEING LATE!

REST ASSURED
THAT I WILL CONTINUE
TO SEARCH FOR ONLY
PEOPLE OF GREAT
TALENT AND CHARACTER
TO FILL THE TWO
REMAINING OFFICES.

I SEE THAT ALL
THE TIME I PUT
INTO SELECTING
JUST THE RIGHT
TEAM PAID OFF!

whisper

SO ALL
OF THAT
SELECTING
AND
RESELECTING
...?

Ohh!

YOU'RE SO
IMPRESSED,
YOU'RE
SPEECHLESS?!

Chaka-
chaka-cha-
cha-cha

Chaka-
chaka-cha-
cha-cha

cha-
cha

Sigh ...

I...VERY
WELL..

I LOOK
FORWARD
TO IT!

YOU DON'T KNOW
HOW HAPPY I AM
TO HEAR THAT!
I, MAKOTO TAKEI,
WOULD THROW
AWAY MY LIFE IN
THE NAME OF
YUKI-KUN!



I HAVE
TO GO
HOME AND
CHANGE. I'M
LATE FOR
WORK!

OH,
CRAP!

MANABE-KUN!
ONCE YOU'VE BEEN
SWORN IN AS VICE
PRESIDENT, YOU
WILL HAVE TO CUT
DOWN ON PART-TIME
WORK! YOUR DUTY
TO THE SCHOOL
AND YUKI-KUN MUST
COME FIRST.

I KNOW, I
KNOW! BUT
UNTIL THEN...

LOOK AT
THE TIME!
THIS IS BAD--
I'M GONNA
BE LATE!



MANABE-KUN!
YOU WILL
PLEASE STOP
TREATING
YUKI-KUN SO
ROUGHLY!

EEHH?!

THE
HONORABLE
VICE PRESIDENT
IS RETURNING
HOME!

PLEASE
SEND HIM OFF
PROPERLY!

YEAH,
YEAH. LATER,
MACHI!

IF THAT'S
THE CASE, I'M
SURPRISED YOU
ACCEPTED A
POSITION ON
THE STUDENT
COUNCIL.

I WAS DRAWN
IN BY THE TERM
"SCHOOL DEFENSE
FORCE."

I'M BUSY WITH
LOTS OF PART-
TIME JOBS.

IT'S ROUGH,
YOU KNOW?

SO THAT'S
WHAT HE
MEANT...?

AS THE
PRESIDENT, YOU'RE
THE LEADER, SO
YOU'D HAVE TO BE
RED, OF COURSE.

BUT YOU DON'T
REALLY FIT
THAT IMAGE.

IF YOU
ASK ME...

HUH...?

THE STUDENT
COUNCIL MEMBERS
ARE LIKE THE
DEFENDERS OF
TRUTH AND JUSTICE
AT SCHOOL, RIGHT?
SO, SCHOOL DEFENSE
FORCE! I REALLY
DIG THAT *SENTAI**
STUFF.

"Huh,"
he says.

BUT, IF WE
REALLY ARE A
SENTAI GROUP,
SHOULDN'T WE GIVE
EVERYONE THEIR
OWN COLOR?

IN THAT CASE,
I GET DIBS ON
BLACK. IT'S
COOL BECAUSE
IT'S LIKE AN
OUTLAW!

**sentai*: costumed
superheroes, like the
Power Rangers or
Kamen Rider.





But...

DON'T LET
THAT AFFECT
YOUR OPINION
OF ME. LET'S
BE FRIENDS!

THANKS
FOR SEE-
ING ME
OFF.

NEXT
TIME, LET'S
TALK MORE,
'KAY?

SORRY IF I
MADE YOU
MAD.

M-hm.

I'M
BASICALLY
AN IDIOT...

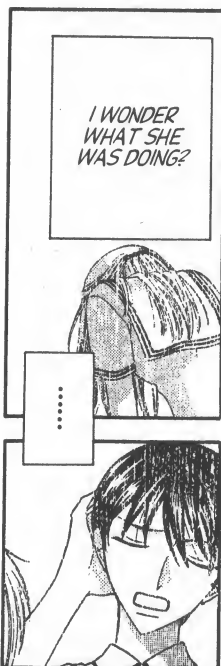
...SO I DO
THAT A
LOT.



WHERE'S...

...KURAGI-SAN?

MANABE-KUN
ESPECIALLY. YOU
COULD SAY HE'S
A MANIFESTATION
OF THE PAPER-
THIN DIFFERENCE
BETWEEN IDIOCY
AND GENIUS.



I WONDER
WHAT SHE
WAS DOING?



OH, KURAGI-KUN
JUST WENT HOME!

So you
see...

CRASH!

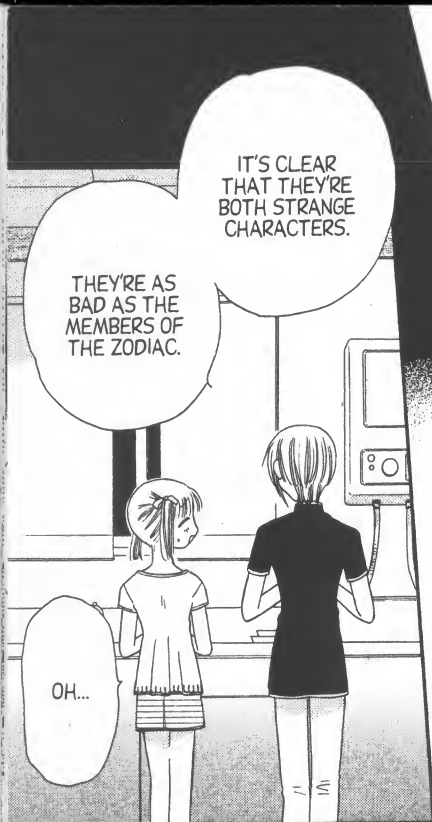
THAT'S
SOME WAY OF
CLEANING UP...

Not that I
can talk.

NOW,
THOSE
TWO...

...MIGHT BE
A LITTLE
DIFFERENT
PERSONALITY-
WISE...

...BUT AS FOR
RAW TALENT,
THEY EXCEL
FAR ABOVE
THE REST!



IT'S CLEAR
THAT THEY'RE
BOTH STRANGE
CHARACTERS.

THEY'RE AS
BAD AS THE
MEMBERS OF
THE ZODIAC.

OH...



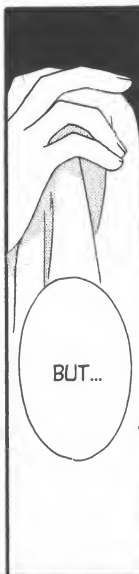
ANYWAY
...



...HE MIGHT
HAVE JUST
MEANT THAT
I'M FUN TO
TEASE...

?

I MUST
SAY...



BUT...



AM I GOING
TO HAVE TO
BRING PEOPLE
LIKE THAT
TOGETHER?

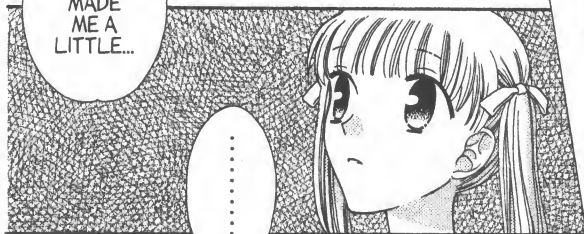
IT SEEMS
LIKE YOU
HAVE A LOT
TO DEAL
WITH.



THAT REALLY
WAS THE
FIRST TIME...

...I'D BEEN
TOLD ANY-
THING LIKE
THAT.

SO IT
MADE
ME A
LITTLE...



.....



...HAPPY.

"YOU'RE
A PRETTY
INTERESTING
GUY!"

I WAS...

...A LITTLE
TAKEN
ABACK.



OF COURSE
THERE WILL
BE SOME
CHALLENGES...

...BUT IF YOU
SEE THEM
THROUGH...

IT SOUNDS
LIKE YOU
HAVE SOME
FUN TIMES
IN STORE!

...OR SOME-
THING.

...I'M SURE
MANY FUN
ADVENTURES
ARE WAITING
FOR YOU.

AT LEAST,
THAT'S THE
FEELING I GET.

.....



I'LL...

...TRY MY
BEST.

I SUPPOSE
YOU'RE
RIGHT.

WHILE BEING
HURT...



...AND
SAVED...

...BY
TRIVIAL
WORDS.

Chapter 50





BLAH, BLAH, BLAH 2

We've arrived at Chapter 50! My feelings upon arriving at this milestone are... "Wow, I've drawn a lot."



WAH!

THANK YOU
FOR YOUR
KINDNESS.

bow

Are you
planning
to eat
all that
yourself?

I'M FINE,
BUT IT'S
DANGEROUS
TO CARRY
ALL THAT.

YOU
SHOULD
PUT THOSE
IN A BASKET.

BASKET?

O-OH. OF
COURSE.
HOW SILLY
OF ME.



AH
HA
HA
!!

AW, CRAP.
LOOK WHAT
I DID...

HA!

AAAUGH...

I WANTED...



*...TO WATCH
YOU FOREVER.*



AH HA
HA! IS
THIS FOR
REAL?!

IS THERE
REALLY
SOMEONE WHO
DOES THE
SAME THINGS
SHE DOES?!

Ah ha
hya hya!

*I DON'T
KNOW
WHY...*



Hee hee!

OH, I'M SORRY.
OH, THAT WAS
FUNNY. YOU
REALLY SHOULD
PUT ALL THAT
IN A BASKET.

*BUT
YOU WERE
LAUGHING SO
HAPPILY...*

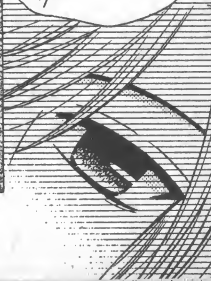
Ah...
YEAH...

Oh,
that was
funny!

HERE. NOW
TRY NOT TO BE
SO ABSENT-
MINDED.

Ah hya
hya...

*AND IT
WAS SO
PLEASANT*





WELCO--

AH.

LUO-CHAN!

WHILE I'M
STUCK HERE,
WORKING MY
ASS OFF, YOU
TWO GO ON
A DATE?

No
fair!

OH NO...
WE'RE NOT
ALONE...



OH... ARISA, YOU
WERE SAYING
YOU MET A MAN
LIKE TOHRU-KUN
AT WORK.

WHICH
JOB WAS
IT...?

HM? OH,
THAT. AT THE
CONVENIENCE
STORE.

DON'T YOU DARE
TRY TO TAKE ON
ANOTHER JOB!
YOU'D DIE FROM
EXHAUSTION!
THERE'S NO
FRICKIN' WAY!

YOU'VE ALREADY
GOT A FULL-TIME
JOB WORKING
IN THAT HUGE
HOUSE, TAKING
CARE OF THREE
HUGE MEN!!

**Don't be
stupid!**

ABSOLUTELY
NOT...

N-no, they're
the ones
taking care
of me...

IT'S
LIKE HIS
CLUMSINESS
REMINDED
ME OF HER.

I'VE TOLD YOU
A THOUSAND
TIMES IT'S NOT
LIKE HE LOOKS
LIKE TOHRU.

My...

IS HE THAT
SCATTER-
BRAINED...?

Clumsiness...
Scatter-
brained...

ANYWAY,
I HAVEN'T
SEEN HIM
SINCE THAT
NIGHT.

DON'T.

ARE
WE GOING
TO STAKE
OUT THE
STORE?

YOU'RE NOT
GETTING PAID
TO STAND
AROUND AND
CHAT!

YES,
SIR!

UOTANI!!

BUT...

...IF HE DID
SHOW UP...

HM?
YEAH.

Ah!
UO-CHAN,
DO YOU
HAVE SOME
TIME THIS
EVENING?

LET'S GO
OUT TO
DINNER,
THE FOUR
OF US...

munch
munch

munch

Sounds
great!

LET'S EAT
MONJA*!!

UOTANI!!!

Yay!

clap

clap

clap

clap

That was
good...

...I WOULDN'T
MIND SEEING
HIM AGAIN.

*monja-yaki: A pan-fried
pancake of mixed vegetables and
meat, similar to okonomiyaki,
only without the egg.

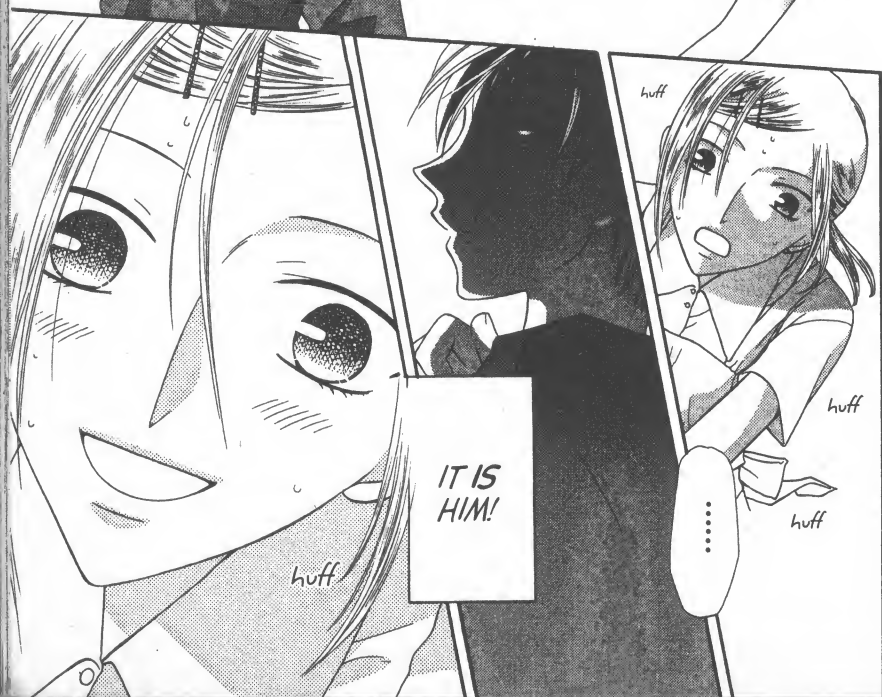
Fruits Basket 9
Part 2:

So I bought a new tracing table. People kept telling me, "Buy a new one!" "That one's too small," "No manga artist has such a cheap tracing table these days," etc. I finally gave in. My old one was pretty cheap... I chose it and bought it when I was drawing the first chapter of Gen'ei Musou, which I will never forget. I had no money, but I wanted to buy the best one I could.

To be continued...



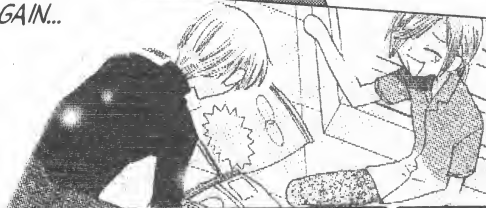






AH...!

TO THINK WE'D
MEET AGAIN...



UM...YOU'RE
THE GIRL
FROM THE
CONVENIENCE
STORE.



wheeze

huff

ARE YOU
ALL RIGHT?
YOU'RE
GASPING...

I'M OKAY.
JUST A
LITTLE OUT
OF BREATH.

I SAW YOU
FROM BEHIND
AND I DIDN'T
WANT TO LOSE
SIGHT OF YOU...

YUP!
THAT'S ME,
ALL RIGHT.

part
/ wheeze
/

THIS IS SUCH A
COINCIDENCE.
I'M SURPRISED.



COULD
IT BE...

...THAT
SHE'S BEEN
THINKING OF
ME AS MUCH
AS I'VE BEEN
THINKING
OF HER?

Heat's
getting
to me.

...SO, WITHOUT
THINKING,
I JUST TOOK
OFF IN
PURSUIT.

AH HA HA! I'M
NOT MAKING ANY
SENSE, AM I?!

grrrowl

grumble

CRAP. IF I GET
ANY HUNGRY,
I'LL BE IN A
CRAZY BAD
MOOD.

I HAVEN'T
EATEN
LUNCH YET.

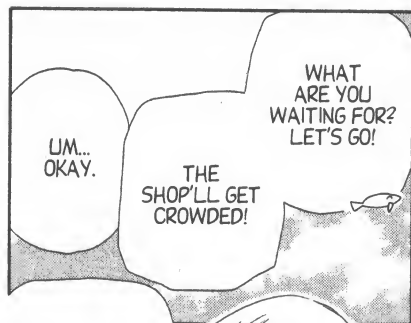
rumble
grumble

ARE YOU
HUNGRY?

MY
TREAT.

SINCE YOU'RE
HERE, WHY
DON'T WE EAT
TOGETHER?

NO WORRIES. IT
IS LUNCHTIME.
I HAVEN'T
EATEN EITHER.



UM...
OKAY.

WHAT
ARE YOU
WAITING FOR?
LET'S GO!

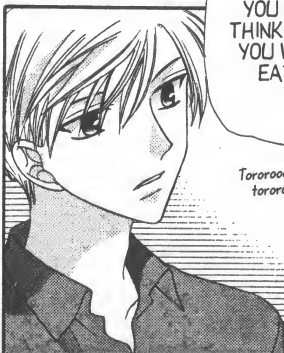
THE
SHOP'LL GET
CROWDED!

TORORO
SOBA IS MY
FAVORITE
THING RIGHT
NOW!



YOU SHOULD
THINK OF WHAT
YOU WANT TO
EAT, TOO!

Torororo
torororo!



REALLY?

REALLY.

I HAVEN'T
PROPERLY
APOLOGIZED FOR
WHAT HAPPENED
AT THE STORE.

Free
meal!
Yahoo!

YES! WAIT
FOR ME,
TORORO
SOBA*!



EH? YOU
SURE YOU'RE
OKAY WITH
JUST TORORO
SOBA?

*tororo soba: grated yam noodles



I'M UOTANI.
ARISA
UOTANI.

SO, WHAT
BRINGS YOU TO
THIS NECK OF
THE WOODS,
KURENO-SAN?

NOTHING,
REALLY. I
JUST KINDA
WANDERED INTO
THE AREA.

*For no particular
reason.*

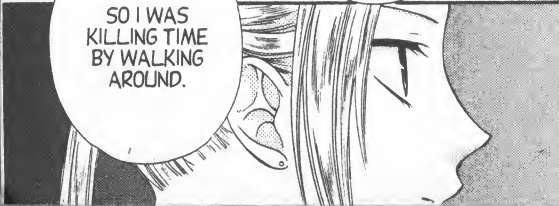


*Thank
you.*

I FINALLY
GOT SOME
TIME OFF
WORK...

...BUT I
DIDN'T HAVE
ANYTHING
TO DO.

SO I WAS
KILLING TIME
BY WALKING
AROUND.

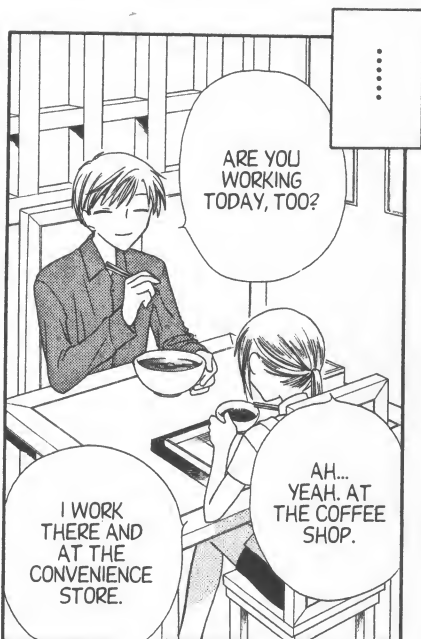
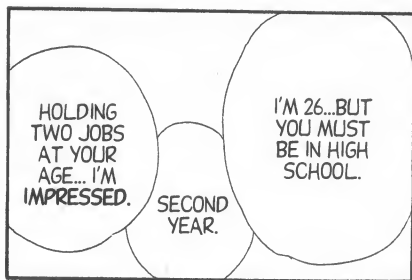


MY NAME...?
KURENO.



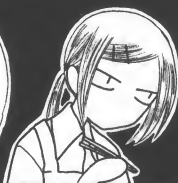
HEY.

WHAT'S
YOUR NAME,
ANYWAY?



WOULD YOU
BELIEVE ME IF
I SAID THAT WAS
MY FIRST TIME
SHOPPING AT A
CONVENIENCE
STORE?

IT'S TRUE.
I GUESS
THAT'S A
LITTLE
PATHETIC.



TRUTH BE
TOLD, I REALLY
DON'T HAVE A
CLUE HOW TO
DO THINGS FOR
MYSELF.

BUT, WELL,
TO HAVE NEVER
BOUGHT ANY-
THING FROM A
CONVENIENCE
STORE--AT 26--
AND A BEING A
GUY--!! HOW?!

AH HA HA!
NOTHING
LIKE THAT.

WHAT ARE
YOU?! ARE
YOU REALLY
THE RULER
OF SOME
KINGDOM OR
SOMETHING?!

Uo-chan, you're stereo-
typing a bit.





AS HAS BEEN
ESTABLISHED,
I LIVE AND
I WORK.



BECAUSE
IT'S A WASTE
OF MY TIME.

I USUALLY
DON'T DO
POINTLESS
THINGS.

IT REALLY WAS
UNUSUAL THAT
I WENT TO THE
CONVENIENCE
STORE THAT
NIGHT.



...I DON'T KNOW
WHAT TO DO
WITH MYSELF.

SO ON THE
OTHER HAND,
WHEN I GET
TIME OFF, LIKE
TODAY...

POINTLESS?



I HAVE
EVERYTHING
I WANT. I'M
CONTENT.

I'M
SURE...



I'M
HAPPY.



ARE YOU
HAPPY...

...LIVING
LIKE
THAT?

IN THAT
CASE...

...YOU
SHOULD LOOK
HAPPIER WHEN
YOU SMILE.

...I'M MORE
CONTENT
THAN
ANYONE.

THAT
SMILE
OF HIS...

I FELT IT...

EH
...?

...AND
WHEN
I FIRST
SAW HIM.

...TODAY...

タタ



...DURING
THAT
WASTED
TIME.

EVEN
THOUGH
YOU AND
I MET...



...BUT THAT
DIDN'T
FEEL LIKE
A WASTE
OF TIME
TO ME!

MAYBE
I'M JUST A
STUPID GIRL...



EVER SINCE
I MET YOU
I'VE THOUGHT,
MAYBE IT WAS
MORE THAN
COINCIDENCE...

MEETING
AT THE
CONVENIENCE
STORE...

...EATING
SOBA LIKE
THIS...

...THAT
YOU
BUMPED
INTO
ME.


I COULDN'T
GET YOU
OUT OF MY
MIND.

IT'S AN
INCREDIBLY
LONELY
SMILE

I'M
SORRY!



I'M SURE
IT WAS
POINTLESS.



...I WAS
HAPPY!

BECAUSE,
I THOUGHT,
MAYBE OUR
MEETING
MEANT
SOMETHING.

BECAUSE
...



I DON'T KNOW
WHY, BUT IT
REALLY PISSES
ME OFF!

WELL, SORRY
FOR WASTING
YOUR TIME!

AND
SORRY FOR
MAKING YOU
WASTE YOUR
MONEY, BUYING
ME LUNCH!

THAT
PISSES
ME OFF!



THANKS! I'M
LEAVING!



どかん
GURK!

ARISA,
WAIT!

WHAT MAKES
YOU THINK YOU
CAN START
CALLING ME BY
MY FIRST NAME,
BASTARD?!

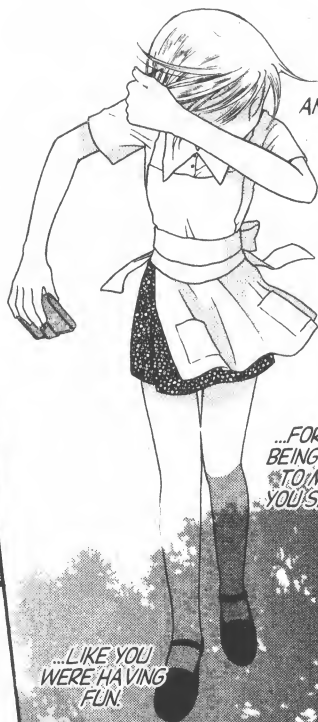
EH?
BUT--

DON'T FOLLOW
ME, DON'T TALK
TO ME--I'M MAD
AS HELL RIGHT
NOW!

PLEASE,
CALM DOWN.

I'M NOT
CRYING!!

OKAY...?
PLEASE
DON'T CRY.




AND SORRY...

...FOR NOT
BEING ABLE
TO MAKE
YOU SMILE...

...LIKE YOU
WERE HAVING
FUN!

...SA!



I WAS
HAPPY, TOO...

I'M SORRY.

...THAT YOU
SPOKE TO ME.
REALLY.

I SPOKE
WITHOUT
THINKING.



...WANTED
TO SEE
YOU, TOO.

EVER SINCE
THAT NIGHT.

I COULDN'T
GET YOU OUT
OF MY MIND
EITHER.

RUNNING
UNTIL
YOU'RE
COVERED IN
SWEAT...

JUST TO
TALK TO
ME.



I...



Hee hee...

YOU ARE
BLUSHING.



OKAY.



HEH
HEH.



ARE YOU
BLUSHING?

SHUT
UP!

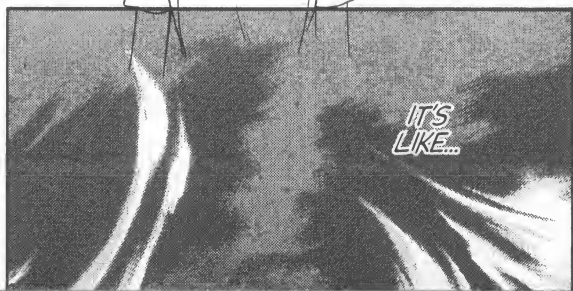


AH...



NOW
THAT'S
A REAL
SMILE.





...HE JUST
SAID...

... "I LOVE YOU."

SO,
ARISA-
SAN...

AND WHY DID HE
LEAVE WITHOUT A
WORD?! WHAT?! DID
I HAVE YAM BREATH,
OR SOMETHING?!

...DO YOU
LIKE HIM,
TOO...?

I don't
know!

HE'S
MYSTERIOUS!
AND HE DOESN'T
ALWAYS MAKE
SENSE!

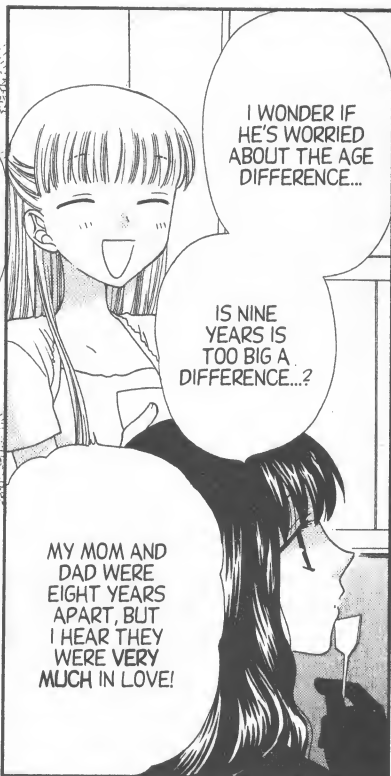
Yams
...?



BUT I
HAVE TO
ADMIT...

...IT FEELS A
LITTLE BIT
LONELY...

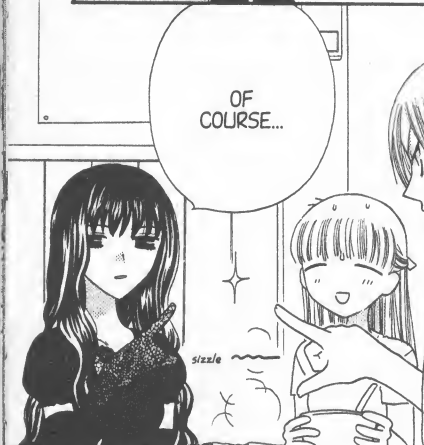
...KNOWING
THAT ONE OF
MY FRIENDS
MAY HAVE
FOUND HER
SPECIAL
SOMEONE.



I WONDER IF
HE'S WORRIED
ABOUT THE AGE
DIFFERENCE...

IS NINE
YEARS IS
TOO BIG A
DIFFERENCE...?

MY MOM AND
DAD WERE
EIGHT YEARS
APART, BUT
I HEAR THEY
WERE VERY
MUCH IN LOVE!



OF
COURSE...

AS IF WE'LL
LET HIM. WE'RE
DEFINITELY
CRASHING THEIR
FIRST DATE,
AREN'T WE,
HANAJIMA?!

WHAT ARE YOU
SAYING?! YOU'LL
BE SOMEONE'S
GIRLFRIEND BEFORE
YOU KNOW IT! THEN
HE'LL DEFINITELY
WANT TO KEEP YOU
ALL TO HIMSELF!



I'M ALL
RIGHT.



ARE YOU
LONELY...?



UGH... IF THAT'S
THE CASE, I'M
CALLING IT OFF,
RIGHT THERE.

...HE'S
MARRIED
WITH
CHILDREN...?

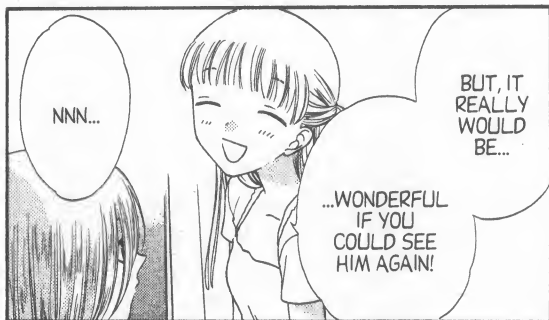


WELL,
WHATEVER.
EITHER WAY,
I CAN'T SEE
HIM UNLESS
HE COMES TO
SEE ME.

*We'll just
see what
happens.*

REALLY...?

AH...
COULD
IT BE...



NNN...

BUT, IT
REALLY
WOULD
BE...

...WONDERFUL
IF YOU
COULD SEE
HIM AGAIN!



IF ONLY,
I COULD
ALWAYS...

...BE
NEAR
YOU!

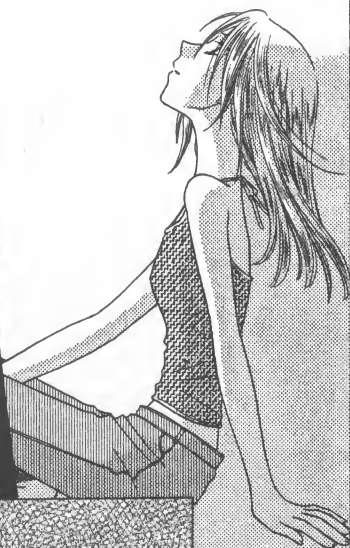
AND
TOUGH...

YOUR
LIPS...

WELCOME
BACK,
KURENO.

I WONDER...

WILL I SEE
YOU AGAIN?



IF ONLY,
I COULD
WATCH
OVER YOU!

I WON'T
EVEN BE
ABLE TO SEE
YOU AGAIN

NO.
EVERY-
THING'S
FINE...

...AKITO.

I TRUST
YOU DIDN'T
CAUSE ANY
MISCHIEF
OUTSIDE?

BUT I'M
SURE...





I feel so grateful.

SHE SAYS,
LADIES AND
GENTLEMEN!!!

They can't see
it if you block it,
Ayame-san!

Harada-sama, Araki-
sama, Kawaai-sama,
Mom, Dad and everyone
who reads and supports
this manga, thanks so
much for your support!

And thanks for the
Valentine's chocolate
and presents!

And next it's Kisa's turn.

—Natsuki Takaya





BLAH, BLAH, BLAH 3

The reason middle-school Arisa doesn't have blonde hair in this chapter is that she went back to her original color. She's rehabilitating...

IT'S ALL
RIGHT,
HONEY.

LET'S GO
HOME,
OKAY?

SO
NOISY...

...SHE
DOESN'T...
FEEL
GOOD...

SHE
SAID...

!

SAKI!

SAKI-
CHAN!

I'M SORRY.
WE THOUGHT
YOU MIGHT
BE OKAY IN
A PLACE
LIKE THIS.


flap
flap
flap

SAKI-
CHAAAAAN!

COME ON!
HURRY UP!



IT'S SO
STRANGE. SAKI
IS THE ONLY ONE
IN OUR FAMILY
WITH A POWER
LIKE THAT.



WE CAN'T
JUST TAKE
HER TO THE
HOSPITAL. IT
MIGHT ONLY
HURT SAKI-
CHAN MORE.



I'M WORRIED
ABOUT SAKI'S
FUTURE.

SHE'LL HAVE
TO SUFFER
BECAUSE OF A
SPECIAL GIFT
THAT OTHER
PEOPLE DON'T
HAVE.

IT'S A
POWER...

...THAT
OTHER
PEOPLE
WON'T
UNDERSTAND.



THE VOICES
ARE OVER-
WHELMING.

SHE'S BEEN
THIS WAY
EVER SINCE
SHE WAS
BORN.

IT'S
FRUSTRATING
THAT WE CAN'T
EVEN DO
ANYTHING
TO EASE THE
PAIN.




A
STRANGE
POWER

WHY IS IT
THAT THE
VOICES
OF MY
FAMILY'S
AND OTHER
PEOPLE'S
HEARTS...

...COME INTO MY
HEAD UNCON-
TROLLABLY?

A POWER
I WAS BORN
WITH...
A STRANGE
POWER.

BUT THEY
DO THEIR
BEST.



...BUT
THEY DON'T
UNDERSTAND.
NOBODY
DOES. NOT
EVEN ME.



MY PARENTS
TRY TO MAKE
ME FEEL
COMFORTABLE
WITH IT...

I KNOW WHAT
YOU'RE THINKING
RIGHT NOW.
YOU'RE THINKING,
"DADDY SURE
LOOKS TIRED."





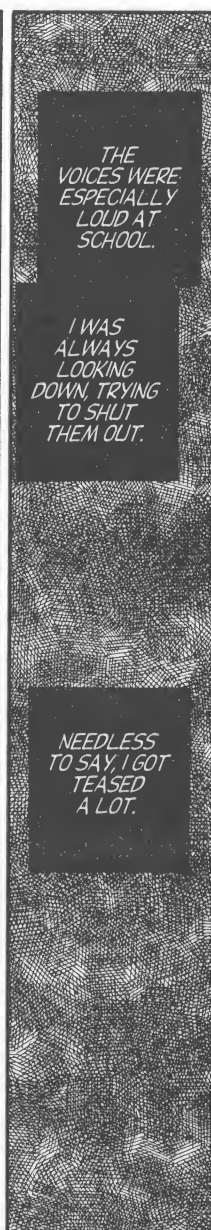
Nah-
nah!

EW!! STAY
AWAY! DON'T
TOUCH ME,
WITCH!

I DON'T WANT
YOUR WITCHY
GERMS, WITCH!

AND
THEN...

...I DID IT.



THE
VOICES WERE
ESPECIALLY
LOUD AT
SCHOOL.

I WAS
ALWAYS
LOOKING
DOWN, TRYING
TO SHUT
THEM OUT.

NEEDLESS
TO SAY, I GOT
TEASED
A LOT.



A WITCH!
SHE'S A
WITCH!

SAY
SOMETHING,
WITCH!

C'MON,
GUYS, CUT
IT OUT.

BUT SHE'S
REALLY A
WITCH.

SHE'S ALL
GLOOMY
AND DOESN'T
TALK.

SCHOOL
WAS
AGONY.

Why does
Hana make
her a
witch?

MY SISTER
TOLD ME THAT
WITCHES EAT
LIVE NEWTS!

EAT IT.
YOU'RE
A WITCH,
AREN'T YOU?

SOMETHING
TERRIBLE.

EAT IT!!

EE...

HEY,
WHAT
ARE
YOU...

HOLD
HER
DOWN!

PUT IT
IN HER
MOUTH!

.....
!

IN HER
MOUTH!

squish

EEEEK!

C'MON!
DO IT!

I...WOULD
NEVER...

...EAT TH...

I HATE YOU.

BE QUIET...

I REALLY
HATE YOU.

IF I'M A
WITCH...

...WHAT
ARE YOU?

*I WISH YOU
WOULD DIE...*

IS IT OKAY FOR
YOU TO DO
SOMETHING SO
TERRIBLE?

DIE...

BE QUIET.

DIE...

EWV!

SHE ATE
IT! SHE
REALLY
ATE IT!

SHE PUT
IT IN HER
MOUTH
JUST NOW!

STOP IT!
LEAVE HER
ALONE!

SHE
REALLY IS
A WITCH!
SCARY!



DIE!

I HEAR
HE FINALLY
REGAINED
CONSCIOUSNESS
THIS MORNING

BUT HIS MOTHER
WAS BY HIS SIDE
THE WHOLE TIME..
THEY SAID SHE
FAINED FROM
STRAIN...

...AND NOW
SHE'S BEEN
HOSPITALIZED.

HAVE THEY
FOUND OUT
WHAT CAUSED
THE BOY TO
COLLAPSE?

NOT YET...

IT'S BECAUSE
I WANTED HIM
TO DIE...





HOW MANY
TIMES DO
I HAVE TO
TELL YOU...?

THAT'S WHY
HE ALMOST
DIED...

BECAUSE I...

...WILLED
HIM TO DIE
WITH ALL
MY HEART...

BUT,
SAKI-CHAN,
THERE'S NO
PROOF THAT
YOUR POWER IS
THE CAUSE.

THERE'S NO
PROOF THAT
IT WASN'T
MY POWER,
EITHER...

OH,
SAKI...

I TRIED TO
KILL HIM...

SAKI-CHAN,
THAT'S--

WHEN WILL
YOU TAKE
ME TO THE
POLICE...?

WHEN
WILL THEY
PUT ME IN
PRISON...?



I'M
SCARED...

I
REALLY
...

...THOUGHT
THAT I HAD...
KILLED HIM...

NO
MORE

IF IT
HAPPENS
AGAIN...

...I MIGHT
KILL HIM
FOR REAL...

I DON'T
WANT TO
WISH...

...FOR
ANYONE'S
DEATH EVER
AGAIN.

Fruits Basket 9
Part 3:

Continued...

Yup. Over the years that table had absorbed my blood, sweat, and tears...I don't really like that phrase. Anyway, it was my beloved table that had worked hard with me for nearly eight years. You understand why it was so hard to let go? The new tracing table is enshrined on my desk, but I couldn't throw the old one away, so it's at my feet. Sometimes I kick it, though.



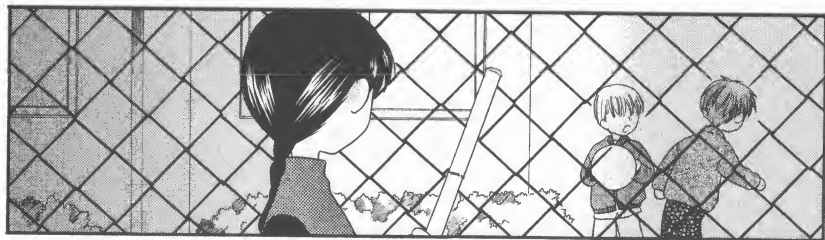


YOU SHOULD
TAKE BETTER
CARE OF
YOUR THINGS!

I FELT...

Hee hee...
Can you
believe her?
Hee hee...

...THAT IT
WAS THE
PUNISHMENT
I DESERVED.



EEEEK!

Trip

カ
タ

WAHH!

THUD

ド
ン

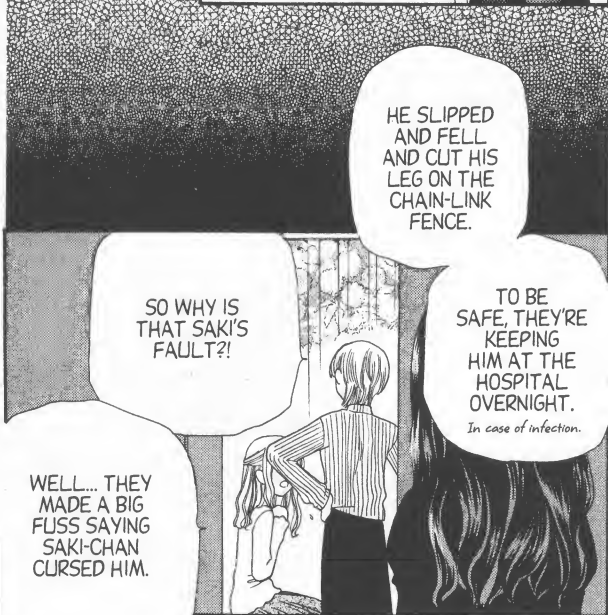
GOOD...

YOU
MUSTN'T
COME NEAR
ME ANY-
MORE...

phew

Fruits Basket 9
Part 4:

This is about dreams. Until now, none of the characters from my stories have appeared in my dreams, but I guess because I've been working on Furuba for so long, for the first time Yuki and Kyo appeared. There they were, just walking by minding their own business. I thought, "Why isn't Tohru in my dream?" I was impressed to see them in three dimensions. No, it was a dream though. And never again! (laugh)





YOU'LL
SCARE
MOTHER...

MEGUMI...
YOU'RE READING
THOSE BOOKS
AGAIN...?

OBABA* SAID
THAT THEY
MIGHT HELP
EXPLAIN SAKI'S
POWER, SO SHE
BOUGHT A LOT
OF THEM...



That's
absurd!

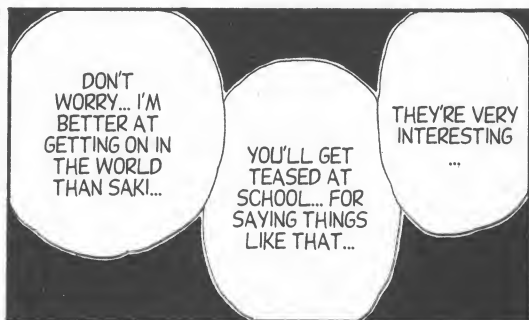
fug

*Obaba = Granny



IT WASN'T
SAKI'S POWER
THAT MADE
THE BOY AT
DAYCARE
GET HURT...

AND THE
TEASING...
WHY DO YOU
JUST STAND
THERE AND
TAKE IT...?



DON'T
WORRY... I'M
BETTER AT
GETTING ON IN
THE WORLD
THAN SAKI...

YOU'LL GET
TEASED AT
SCHOOL... FOR
SAYING THINGS
LIKE THAT...

THEY'RE VERY
INTERESTING
...



WHY IS SAKI
ALWAYS SO
QUIET...?



...BUT I SHOULD
RECEIVE SOME
FORM OF
PUNISHMENT...

FOR THE
SIN OF...

...WISHING SO
DEEPLY AND
WICKEDLY FOR
SOMEONE'S
DEATH.

OF
COURSE
I DESERVE
IT...

IS THAT
ALL YOU
WANT OUT
OF LIFE?



DO YOU
THINK YOU
DESERVE TO BE
PUNISHED...?



...CAN'T
JUDGE ME...

THE
POLICE...



SAKI...

DO YOU
PLAN TO
LIVE YOUR
WHOLE
LIFE...



...AS IF
PEOPLE
EXIST TO
PUNISH
YOU...?

.....

...IN THIS
WORLD...

...IN THIS
WORLD, OVER-
FLOWING WITH
PEOPLE.

THEN...

...I WILL
PRAY.

SO, WHO-
EVER YOU
ARE...

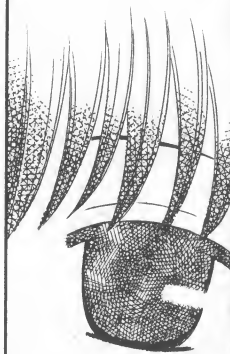
I CAN'T BELIEVE
THAT THERE'S
NOT ONE PERSON
OUT THERE...

...PLEASE
COME TO
MEET HER...

...WHO
WOULDN'T
LOVE SAKI.

BECAUSE
THERE'S
NO WAY...

...THAT SAKI
IS MEANT TO
BE ALONE
HER WHOLE
LIFE...





PLEASE...

IT
SEEMED
LIKE...



...SUCH AN
ABSURD
PRAYER.

IF YOU'RE IN
A FAR OFF
COUNTRY,
THEN GET ON
A PLANE.

HURRY.


COME TO
SAKI...

...AS FAST
AS YOU
CAN.





...THAT
ONCE THERE,
WOULD NEVER
DISAPPEAR.



I THOUGHT
THAT SOME
PRAYERS
COULD
NEVER BE
ANSWERED...



GO HOME,
WITCH! WE
DON'T WANT
YOU AT
SCHOOL!



YEAH,
YOU'RE
CREEPY!
AND
STUPID!



...JUST
AS SOME
STAINS...



SCARY
...

IT'S A
TRUE
STORY.

I HEAR SHE
ALMOST
KILLED
SOMEONE...

HANAJIMA!

AREN'T YOU
GOING TO SEND
OUT SOME
POISON WAVES
TODAY?



SHE
COMMUNI-
CATES WITH
WAVES?

SHE'D BE
SCARY EVEN IF
SHE DID TALK,
WITH THAT
DEEP, CREEPY
VOICE OF HERS.

SHE
DOESN'T
REACT, SHE
DOESN'T
TALK...

NOTHING
CHANGED
WHEN
I WENT
TO MIDDLE
SCHOOL.



UH...ARE
YOU SURE WE
SHOULD BE
DOING THIS?

AND THE
VOICES
KEPT
GETTING
STRONGER.

JUST
HOLD
HER
TIGHT!

.....

C'MON!
SHOW ME.
DO IT!

IS IT TRUE
THAT WHEN
YOU GET MAD,
YOU SEND
OUT POISON
WAVES?

I MUSTN'T
THINK ABOUT
ANYTHING.

FOCUS ON
THE PAIN AND
EMPTY YOUR
MIND.

THIS
SUCKS.

C'MON,
HANAJIMA-
CHAN, GET
MAD!

NO, I DON'T
WANT ANYONE
TO DIE.

I DON'T
WANT TO
KILL THEM...

I CAN'T.
PLEASE, DON'T
HURT ANYONE.

NO!

DON'T TELL
ME YOU'RE
SCARED
OF HER?

BUT
I HEARD
THAT IF
YOU'RE HIT
BY THEM,
YOU'LL
REALLY
DIE.

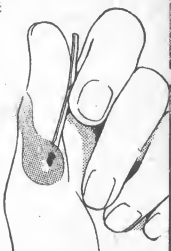
I'M NOT
AFRAID OF
DYING.

!

ME, TOO!
I DON'T
CARE IF
I DIE!

NOW, SINCE
EVERYONE'S
WILLING
TO DIE...

LET'S
TURN
UP THE
HEAT!



THANK
GOODNESS

CRAP!

Where's our
lookout?

SHE...EVEN
BURNED
HER ARM!

T-

TEACHER!
HANAJIMA-SAN
WAS PLAYING
WITH MATCHES!

WHAT ARE
YOU KIDS
DOING HERE?
SCHOOL'S
OVER!

WE TRIED
TO STOP
HER, BUT...

slump

EVERYONE...

...IS SAFE.

LET'S
MOVE.

SAKI-
CHAN!

OH, SAKI...

YOU POOR
GIRL. IT'S NO
TROUBLE.

MOVE
WITHOUT
ME...

I DON'T...

...WANT
TO CAUSE
ANY MORE
TROUBLE...

I UNDERSTAND
THAT YOU DON'T
WANT TO BLAME
THEM, SAKI...

...BUT WE DON'T
WANT TO LEAVE
YOU WITH
THOSE GIRLS.

WE
DON'T WANT
YOU IN THIS
ENVIRONMENT.

PARENTS
ALWAYS
WORRY
ABOUT THEIR
CHILDREN.

WE COULD
NEVER JUST
MOVE AWAY
AND LEAVE
YOU BEHIND.

IT'S WHAT
WE DO. IT'S
LOVE.

LET'S GO
TO A NEW
ENVIRONMENT,
WITH A NEW
SCHOOL.



...DON'T
GIVE UP
YET.

SO
PLEASE...

WE LOVE
YOU...

...SAKI.

SAKI...

WITH
SLIMMER
STILL FAR
OFF...

...I
CHANGED
SCHOOLS.



TAKE THIS
OFF AT
ONCE!

AND
ON YOUR
FIRST DAY
AT A NEW
SCHOOL!

HANAJIMA-
SAN! YOUR
FINGERNAILS!



WHAT A
STRANGE
ADULT...

ARE YOU
TELLING ME
TO LOSE THE
PROOF THAT
I'M A SINNER...?



*It's
dark
blue

IT'S
BECAUSE
THE UNIFORM
ISN'T BLACK
...

WHAT
NONSENSE
ARE YOU
TALKING
ABOUT?!



EVEN
IN A NEW
ENVIRONMENT
...

SHE SAYS
THEY'RE PROOF
THAT SHE'S A
SINNER! WHAT
DO YOU WANT
ME TO DO
ABOUT IT?

SENSEI!
HANAJIMA-
SAN'S NAILS
ARE BLACK!



I THOUGHT
I MUSTN'T
FORGET.

I THOUGHT
IT WOULD BE
SHAMELESS.

...I DIDN'T
TRY TO
LOWER
THE WALL
BETWEEN
MYSELF
AND OTHER
PEOPLE.

WHAT DON'T
YOU WANT ME
TO GIVE UP...

...FATHER...?

HERE!

Kya
ha
ha!

DON'T
GIVE UP
YET.

TODAY YOU
GET A DOUBLE
SERVING FOR
FREE...

...HANAJIMA-
SAN!

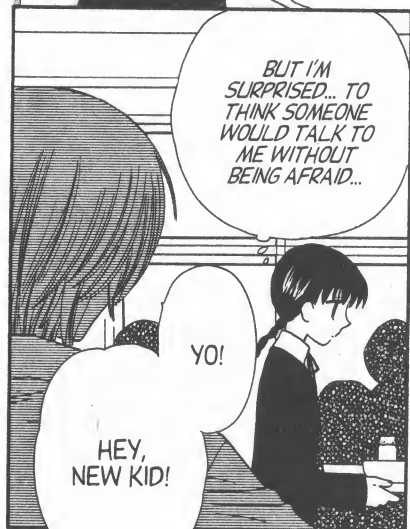


I WOULD BE SO
HAPPY IF YOU
WOULD LIKE
THEM TOO,
HANAJIMA-SA--

HONDA-
SAN!

I THINK
THE SCHOOL
LUNCHES HERE
ARE MOST
DELICIOUS.

I'M TOHRU
HONDA! IT'S SO
VERY NICE TO
MEET YOU!



BUT I'M
SURPRISED... TO
THINK SOMEONE
WOULD TALK TO
ME WITHOUT
BEING AFRAID...

YO!

HEY,
NEW KID!



Ahh!
I'M
SORRY!

THERE'S A
LINE BACK
HERE, SO
TALK TO
HER LATER!

A
DITZ...?

AND
WHY SUCH
POLITE
LANGUAGE
...?



WHAT'S THE
MATTER,
LO-CHAN?

HANAJIMA,
HUH? HUM...

HANAJIMA
...

PLEASE,
HANAJIMA-
SAN, SIT
DOWN!

WELL THEN,
LET'S HURRY
AND START
EATING
TOGETHER!

カ" ㄗ

OH! YOU'RE
RIGHT! YOU'RE
HANA-CHAN,
HANA-CHAN!

THESE
TWO ARE
WEIRD...

IF
KYOKO-
SAN
WERE
HERE...

...YOU'D BE
HANA-CHAN!

OH NO...
IF I THINK
ABOUT THEM
TOO MUCH, THEIR
VOICES MIGHT
REACH ME...

I'M SORRY,
BUT...

DID YOU SAY
SOMETHING?

?

IN MY CASE, IT
MIGHT BE TWO
HUNDRED HURTS
AND NO GOOD
THINGS!

NOW THAT YOU
MENTION IT, I DON'T
KNOW IF ANYTHING
GOOD COMES FROM
ASSOCIATING WITH
ME, EITHER...

...I HAVE NO
INTENTION
OF EATING
WITH YOU...

stand

YOU'D
BE BETTER
OFF NOT
ASSOCIATING
WITH ME...

YOU WOULD
RECEIVE A
HUNDRED HURTS
AND NOT A
SINGLE GOOD
THING ...

I WASN'T
JOKING, AND
I DEFINITELY
DIDN'T WANT TO
MAKE ANYONE
DEPRESSED...

Are you listening...?

GIVE IT A
REST. WHO
CARES
ABOUT THE
DETAILS?


TODAY YOU'VE
CHANGED
SCHOOLS, THE
WEATHER'S
GOOD, AND
THERE'S SCHOOL
LUNCH.

AND IT'S NOT
THAT I WANT
YOU TO SET
A GOAL....

FROM NOW
ON, I'LL DO MY
BEST TO BE THE
TYPE OF PERSON
WHO SPREADS
GOODNESS TO ALL
AROUND HER!

YES!
YOU'RE
RIGHT!

Gasp!




**we get
that a lot!**



*ITADA-
KIMASU!
THANKS
FOR THE
FOOD.*

**NOW SIT
DOWN AND
EAT WITH US
WEIRDOS!**



**YOU REALLY
ARE WEIRD...**

*FROM
THE
MOMENT
I FIRST
MET
YOU...*



*THE VOICES
I WOULD
SOMETIMES
HEAR...*

*...YOU TWO
REALLY
WERE
STRANGE.*



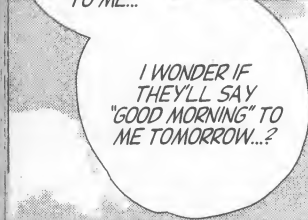
*...THAT
SEEMED TO
BE CRYING
SOFTLY.*



*YOU
SECRETLY
HELD
VOICES...*



*...WERE
NEVER JUST
PRETTY
VOICES.*





UH, UM,
THAT IS--!!

EH?!



THAT IS...
I MEAN...

WHAT'S THIS?
TOHRU, DID
YOU CONFESS
YOUR LOVE OR
SOMETHING?

FOR THE
FIRST TIME
IN MY LIFE,
I FELT
HAPPY.



HA--

SO MANY TIMES
SINCE THEN,
I THOUGHT TO
MYSELF THAT
THEY WOULD BE
BETTER OFF IF
THEY DIDN'T
ASSOCIATE
WITH ME.



...BUT BEFORE
I KNEW IT,
WE WERE A
TEAM...

...AND I WAS
HAPPY.

YEAH.

THE
WEATHER
WILL BE NICE
TOMORROW,
TOO...

I HEARD
THIS FROM
A FRIEND
OF MINE
WHO
GOES TO
YOUR OLD
SCHOOL.

...IT WAS
IN BETWEEN
TWO SEASONS.

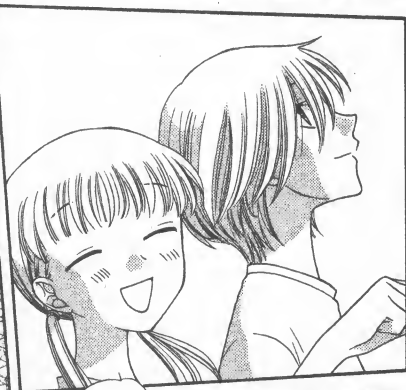
WHEN
I REALIZED
THAT I HAD
ALMOST
FORGOTTEN
MY PLACE...

YES!

SUCH
A KIND
COLOR...

OOHH! THE
SUNSET IS
BRIGHT RED
AGAIN TODAY!

ME...
HAPPY.



YOU'RE
RIGHT!

...YOU
TRIED TO
KILL A
BOY.

HANAJIMA-
SAN, THEY
SAY THAT...

IS
THAT
TRUE?

...WHEN YOU
WERE IN
ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL...

SHE ALSO
SAID YOU
USED TO BE
A TOTAL
DELINQUENT,
SMOKING AND
STUFF.

AND YOU
BURNED THE
ARM OF A GIRL
WHO TRIED TO
STOP YOU!

P-POISON
WAVES, OR
SOMETHING?

WITH
SOME KIND
OF... WHAT
WAS IT?

PO...?
EH?

I DON'T
REALLY
BELIEVE
IN THAT
STUFF...

...BUT SHE
SAID IT WAS
REALLY
SCARY!

YOU WERE
SO MUCH
TROUBLE,
THAT'S
WHY THEY
TRANSFERRED
YOU.

*"TRIED
TO
KILL
A
BOY."*

*"A
BOY"*

I...I DON'T
KNOW. I
SUDDENLY
GOT THIS
SHARP PAIN
IN MY HEAD.

Gasp!

OWW!

O-OH NO...
WHAT'S
WRONG?

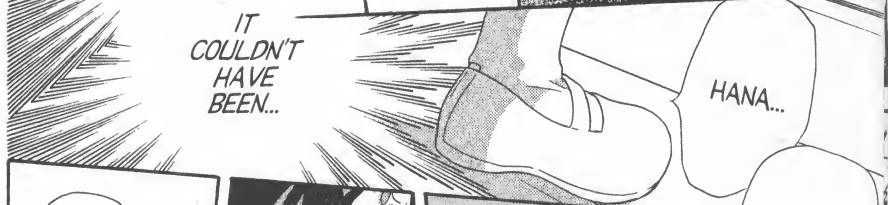
.....

HANA...
JIMA-
SAN?

JUST
NOW...

"KILL..."

OW!





I DON'T
WANT
TO HURT
ANYONE
ANYMORE.

WHY WAS
I EVEN
ALIVE?

ALL
I COULD
DO WAS
CAUSE
PEOPLE
PAIN...

A SIN THAT
WOULDN'T
DISAPPEAR.

A STAIN THAT
WOULDN'T
WASH AWAY.

SO YOU
SHOULDN'T BE
AROUND ME
ANYMORE...

I... I REALLY
DO HAVE A
POWER...

IT ALMOST
KILLED
SOMEONE...

SO, PLEASE...
JUST LEAVE
ME ALONE...



...SO
CLOSE...

WE'RE...

THERE MIGHT
STILL BE A
LOT ABOUT
YOU THAT
I DON'T
KNOW, BUT ...

WE'RE
BECOMING
SUCH GOOD
FRIENDS.

...PLEASE
DON'T LEAVE,
- HANA-CHAN...

I DON'T
WANT TO BE
SEPARATED!

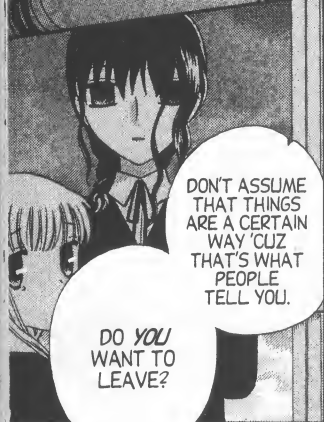
HANA-
CHAN...

I LOVE
YOU.



I LOVE
YOU...

...HANA-
CHAN.



DON'T ASSUME
THAT THINGS
ARE A CERTAIN
WAY 'CUZ
THAT'S WHAT
PEOPLE
TELL YOU.

DO YOU
WANT TO
LEAVE?

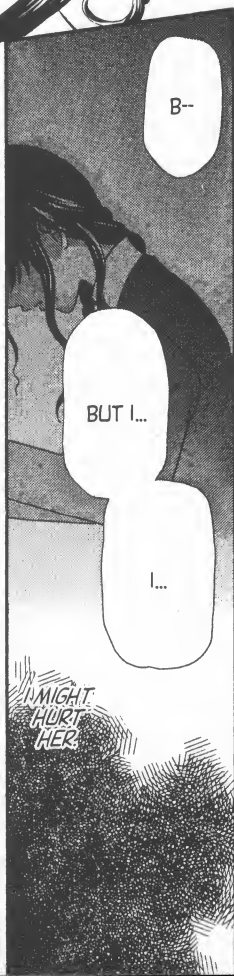


THAT'S
ALL I WANT
TO KNOW.



*I MIGHT
NEVER BE
FORGIVEN.*

YOU
DECIDE.



B--

BUT I...

I...

*I MIGHT
HURT
HER.*

IT WAS SO
BIZARRE...

WHEN
I LOOKED
DOWN...

THERE
WASN'T JUST
ONE SHADOW
ANYMORE

FROM
THAT
MOMENT
ON...



"IT'S WHAT
WE DO. IT'S
LOVE."

THAT
DAY...

AS I WENT
HOME, AS
I LOOKED UP
AT THE SKY,
AT THE
SETTING SUN...

...IT SEEMED
SO LONELY.
THAT IT WAS
TREMBLING.





...WANT
TO BE
WITH
YOU...

I DO...

...I NEVER
WALKED
ALONE
AGAIN.



I WANT TO
BE WITH
YOU!



"I CAN'T
BELIEVE..."

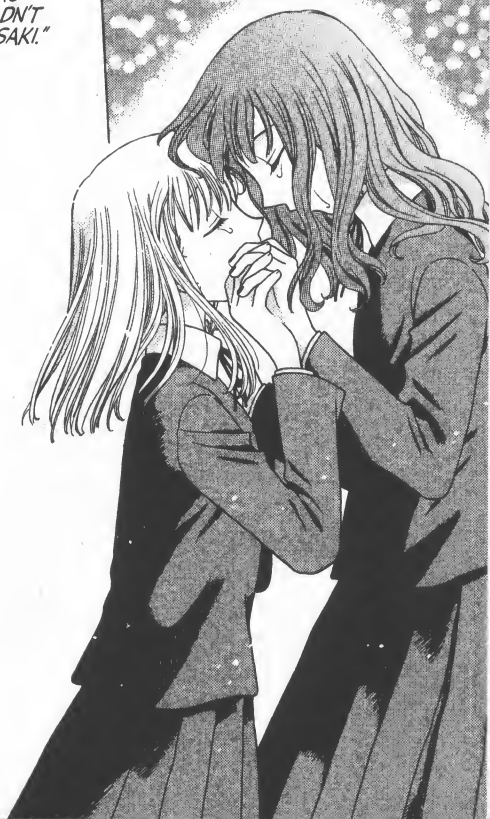
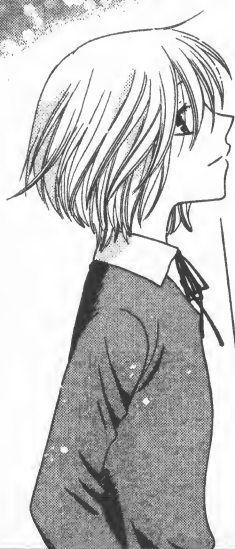
...THAT
THERE'S NOT
ONE PERSON
OUT THERE...

"I WILL
PRAY..."

...SO...

...WHO
WOULDN'T
LOVE SAKI."

"I WILL
PRAY."





AH...

EH?!
WHAT?!

I
COULDN'T
HEAR
THEM...

*...DON'T
GIVE UP."*



WHAT?
HOW'D YOU
DO IT?

REALLY?!
SARI-CHAN!

JUST NOW,
I MADE IT SO
I CAN'T HEAR
THEM...

THAT'S SO
WONDERFUL!

I PROMISED
MYSELF,
I WOULD
NEVER USE
MY POWERS
LIGHTLY...

...BUT I
SUPPOSE
I DID USE
THEM FOR
PUNISHMENT
ONCE OR
TWICE...

WAS IT
BECAUSE
OF THE
COMPOSURE
BORN FROM
A LIFE
FULFILLED?

IT'S SORT
OF LIKE
I WENT "PA!"
AND IT WENT
"SHU"...

DID
YOU UNDER-
STAND THAT
EXPLANATION,
MEGUMI?

THAT WAS
PUNISHMENT?!

Wait a
minute! Hey!

SHE'S SO
CUTE...

IT TOOK ME
A WHILE TO
BE ABLE TO
CONTROL MY
POWER.

BASICALLY,
SHE JUST
GOT THE
HANG OF IT...



I HOPE
SOMEDAY,
I CAN
APOLOGIZE.

OBABA
TOLD ME...

...THAT THE
BOY IS DOING
WELL.

SAKI?

HOW LONG
ARE YOU
GOING
TO KEEP
WEARING
BLACK...?

THEY
WOULD,
WOULDN'T
THEY...?

AT THIS POINT,
IF EITHER OF US
WORE YELLOW OR
PINK, THE WHOLE
TOWN WOULD BE
IN AN UPROAR...

But an uproar
would be
interesting...

Their
clothes!
Blah!

THAT DOESN'T
MEAN YOU HAVE
TO KEEP WEARING
BLACK WITH ME,
MEGUMI...

I'VE BEEN WEARING IT
FOR SO LONG, I DON'T
FEEL COMFORTABLE
UNLESS I'M WEARING
THIS COLOR.

She's
sure, but
so much
blah!

I FEEL MOST
CALM IN THIS
COLOR, TOO...

That's
a lot of
blah!

Oh! Blah!



HURRY UP,
OR WE'LL
LEAVE
WITHOUT
YOU!

HANA-
CHAA!
MEGUMI-
SAAAN!



LET'S
GO.



I'M
GRATEFUL
...

TO FATHER,
MOTHER,
OBABA...AND
TO YOU.

THERE ARE
TIMES...

...WHEN MY
HEART FEELS SO
FULL I THINK IT'S
GOING TO BURST.

FATHER AND THE
OTHERS WOULD
ALWAYS BE THERE
WITH A SMILE...

...AND I JUST
THOUGHT THAT
I WAS SELFISH...
AND UNFEELING.

EVEN WITH ALL
THE LOVE THAT MY
FAMILY SHOWED
ME, THAT ALONE
WAS NEVER ENOUGH.





AND...

...ALL
THAT
PARENTS
WANT...


...IS FOR
THEIR
CHILDREN
TO BE
HAPPY.

THAT'S
REALLY
ALL THAT
MATTERS.

...ALL ANY-
ONE REALLY
WANTS...

...IS TO BE
ACCEPTED BY
OTHERS.

I'M SURE
OF IT.




WHENEVER I
START TO FEEL
THAT WAY, I
THINK OF WHAT
KYOKO SAID-

HUMAN
BEINGS...

...CAN'T
HELP BUT
WANT OTHER
PEOPLE.

PROBABLY
...



PROBABLY...NO
MATTER HOW
MISERABLE THEIR
SITUATION...

...OR HOW
MUCH THEY'RE
LOVED
BY THEIR
FAMILY...

...BECAUSE
THESE ARE
THE KIND OF
BONDS...

...THAT NEVER
GO AWAY.

SO
SOMEDAY,
WHEN YOU
GIRLS ARE
OLDER...

...EVEN IF
YOU START
TO TAKE
DIFFERENT
PATHS...

...YOU'LL
NEVER HAVE
TO FEEL...

...LONELY OR
UNLOVED...

Chapter 52





BLAH, BLAH, BLAH 4

*Have you noticed how Kyo is steadily growing taller?
Yuki, too. A lot of readers have noticed this, right?*



Yes!

IT WOULD BE
TERRIBLE IF
I GOT LOST...

OH! I SEE.

...AFTER
SHISHOU-SAN
WENT TO ALL
THE TROUBLE
OF INVITING ME.

DON'T
SPACE OUT
AND GET
LOST.



JUST...

DON'T
GET YOUR
HOPES UP
TOO HIGH,
OKAY?

SHISHOU JUST
WANTS TO
HAVE LUNCH
OR SOMETHING
AND TALK.



IT MIGHT
BE PRETTY
BORING.



IT'S MY FIRST
TIME VISITING
SHISHOU-
SAN'S HOUSE.

I'M SO
HAPPY!

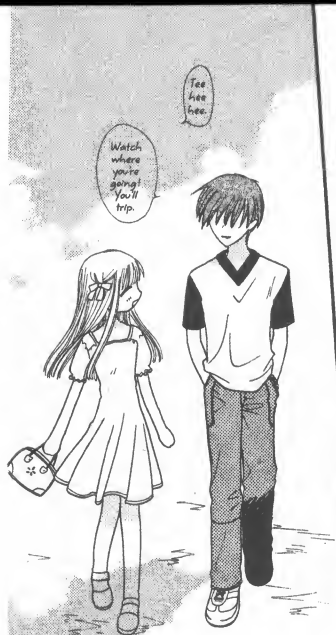
Yesterday

A
date?

YES!

Shishou
says he
wants you
to come
over.

Will
you?

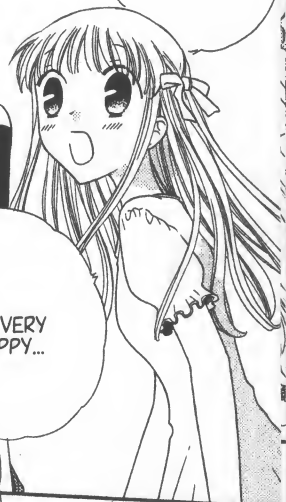


Watch
where
you're
going!
You'll
trip.

Tee
hee
tee.



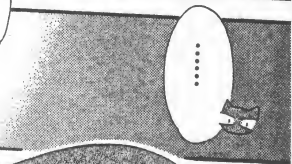
IT
COULDN'T
POSSIBLY
BE!



I'M VERY
HAPPY...

...JUST TO
BE ABLE
TO SHARE
A MEAL
TOGETHER!

SHISHOU!



PARDON OUR
INTRUSION!



...AN EASY
GIRL TO
PLEASE.

YOU'RE
...

WE'RE
HERE!

This time I'm back to video games. I've finished the PC version of **Harukanaru Toki no Naka de 2**, but I also bought the PS2 version and am playing through that. I really do seem to like this game (laugh). I'm also enjoying playing RPGs as usual, but I'm very hooked on the adventure game **ICO**. Silent kindness, silent loneliness, being so close and yet so far...um, I can't really explain it (laugh). It's a great game. I highly recommend it. As long as I'm recommending things, the **Resident Evil** remake for the GameCube brought back a lot of memories!



SHISHOU!
WHAT ARE
YOU BURNING
THIS TIME?!

EH?

THE BOOK
WAS SO
INTERESTING,
I COULDN'T
PUT IT
DOWN.

SORRY,
SORRY.

**CRASH
BANG**

THE STEW...
AAAAH, YOU
EVEN RUINED
THE FISH!

SINCE TOHRU-
SAN'S COME
ALL THIS WAY,
I THOUGHT IT
WOULD BE NICE
IF I COOKED
FOR HER.

CLATTER

CLATTER

BURN IT!

IT'S
SHIGURE-
KUN'S NEW
BOOK.

CRASH
STOP
READING BOOKS
WHILE YOU'RE
COOKING! HOW
MANY TIMES
DO I--FIRE!!

Put out the fire!

*Book Title: In the Moonlight



IT'S WONDERFUL
THAT YOU SEEM
TO BE DOING
WELL, TOO,
SHISHOU-SAN!

Yes!

HAVE YOU
BEEN DOING
WELL?

IT HAS BEEN
A LONG TIME,
HASN'T IT...

...TOHRU-
SAN?

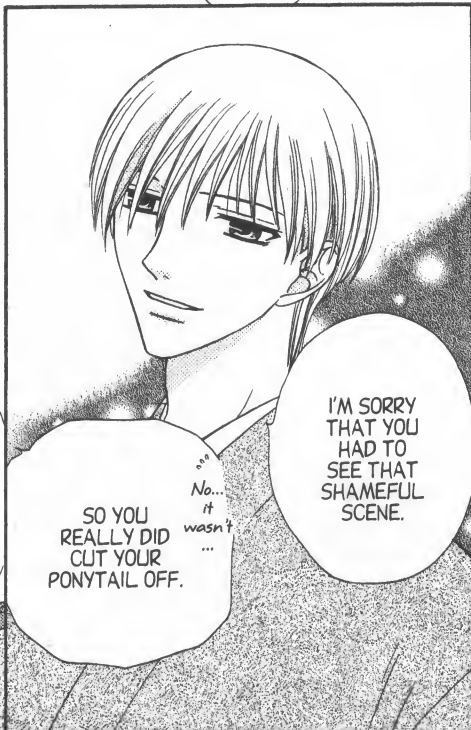


YES, IT'S
GONE.



EVEN WHEN
YOU DON'T
BURN IT,
YOU'RE
COOKING
ISN'T VERY
GOOD.

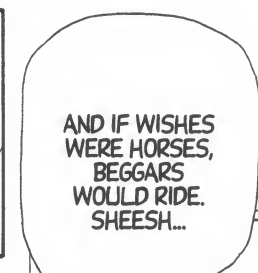
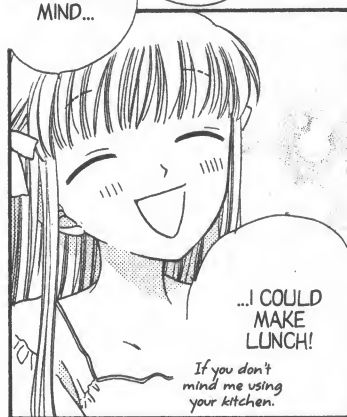
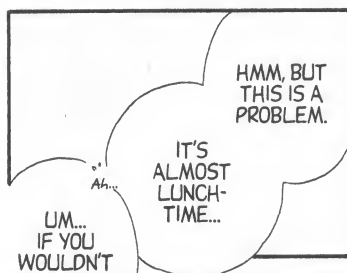
WHY'D YOU
BOTHR
TRYING?



I'M SORRY
THAT YOU
HAD TO
SEE THAT
SHAMEFUL
SCENE.

SO YOU
REALLY DID
CUT YOUR
PONYTAIL OFF.

No...
it wasn't
...





IS THAT
ALL RIGHT?

*Or maybe some-
thing else...*

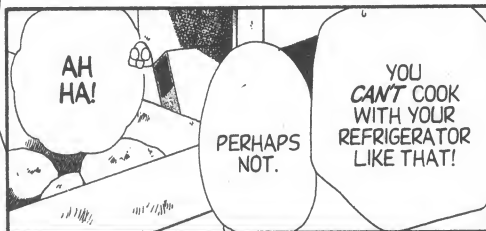
IT LOOKS
LIKE I COULD
MAKE CURRY.



I DON'T
NORMALLY
COOK. FOR
OBVIOUS
REASONS.

IT MIGHT
AS WELL
BE EMPTY.

.....



AH
HA!

PERHAPS
NOT.

YOU
CAN'T COOK
WITH YOUR
REFRIGERATOR
LIKE THAT!



AGH!
NEVER
MIND!

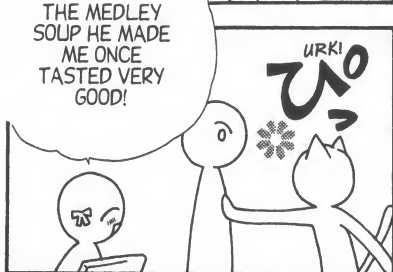
DIDN'T YOU
HEAR ME
BEFORE?
IF WISHES
WERE
HORSES...

BUT
THIS TIME
I REALLY
FEEL LIKE
I COULD
DO IT.

YOU DON'T
HAVE TO
HELP!

AAHH...
CURRY
SOUNDS
DELICIOUS.

IS THERE
ANYTHING I--





EH...
EH?
EH?!

SHISHOU!
ON SECOND
THOUGHT,
JUST GET
OUT OF THE
KITCHEN!

ALL
RIGHT,
ALL
RIGHT.

READ YOUR
BOOK OR
SOMETHING!



REALLY?

NOW,
NOW.

SPYING IS A
NASTY HABIT,
KUNIMITSUJ.



I'VE BEEN
BANISHED.

WHAT ARE
YOU DOING BY
YOURSELF?
WASN'T KYO
SUPPOSED TO
BE HERE?

HUH?



Y-yes!

Okay!
Let's get
this over
with!

Hee
hee
hee



RECENTLY,
HE'S EVEN
BEEN TALKING
TO ME A LOT.

I WASN'T SURE
HE'D EVER BE
ABLE TO OPEN
UP LIKE THAT TO
ANYONE BUT YOU,
KAZUMA-SAN.

I'M GLAD.



It's fine.

Well,
okay.

You're
undoing
your hair.
Can you
redo it?

HA
HA!

HE LOOKS
LIKE HE'S
HAVING FUN.



OH!

I'LL
GET IT.

THIS TIME
LAST YEAR...

...HE
WOULDN'T
TRY TO
EVEN LIFT
HIS FACE,
LET ALONE
SMILE.

HE WAS
FULL OF
DESPAIR.



KAZUMA-
SAN...



HE WAS FILLED
WITH NOTHING
BUT THE SCENT
OF DARKNESS...

...THAT
RESEMBLED
DEATH.



IT WAS
KYO'S
FATHER.

ALL HE SAID
WAS THAT HE'D
LIKE TO MEET
WITH YOU TO
TALK ABOUT
SOMETHING.



KAZUMA-
SAN, I HAVE
A MESSAGE
FOR YOU.

OH...

WHO WAS
ON THE
PHONE?



AFTER ALL
THIS TIME,
WHAT COULD
HE WANT TO
TALK ABOUT?

AND ON A
DAY WHEN
KYO IS HERE...

WILL YOU
MEET WITH
HIM?





WHAT?
YOU'RE
GOING OUT?

HUH?

I'M SORRY.
SOMETHING
SUDDENLY CAME
UP. I HAVE TO
MEET WITH
SOMEONE.



I CAN
GUESS TOO
EASILY WHAT
HE'D WANT
TO TALK
ABOUT...

...AND IT
MAKES ME
FEEL SICK.



...DID
SOME-
THING...

...HAPPEN?

ARE YOU
OKAY?



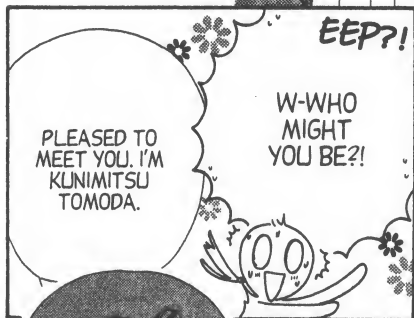
I APOLOGIZE
TO YOU
AS WELL,
TOHRU-SAN.

I WILL BE
BACK AS
SOON AS
POSSIBLE.

AH! YES...
PLEASE
DON'T WORRY
ABOUT ME.

stand

SHISHOU...



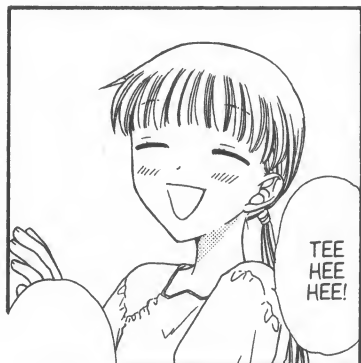
KUUU-
NII-MIIT-
SUUU...

I'VE KNOWN
KYO SINCE
HE WAS
LITTLE.

LIKE THIS ONE
TIME, WHEN HE
CRIED BECAUSE
HE WAS SCARED
OF THE STAIN IN
THE KITCHEN...



* Oya-baba = parent stupid, ko-baba = child-stupid. In Japan it is frowned upon to publicly compliment members of your family or your own employees with them there, and it's usually very embarrassing for the parent being complimented. The term "oya-baba" refers to a parent who foolishly goes on and on about their child's accomplishments, and "ko-baba" would be a child who goes on and on about their parent.



TEE
HEE
HEE!

YOU'RE
RIGHT.



IT'S
NOTHING
TO BE
AFRAID OF.

I'M SURE
IT WILL
STOP BEING
SCARY...



AH! I'M
SORRY. MAYBE
YOU'RE STILL
SCARED OF IT...

I CAN SEE
WHY YOU WERE
SCARED. IT
ALMOST LOOKS
LIKE A FACE.

OF
COURSE
I'M NOT!!

How old
do you
think I
am?!



...GET
BIGGER.

...WHEN
YOUR
BODY...

...AND YOUR
HEART...

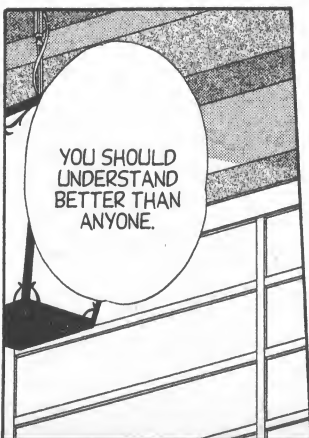


...WILL I BE
ABLE TO
OVERCOME
MY FEARS?



WHEN I'M
OLDER...





...CHANGE
THE FUTURE?

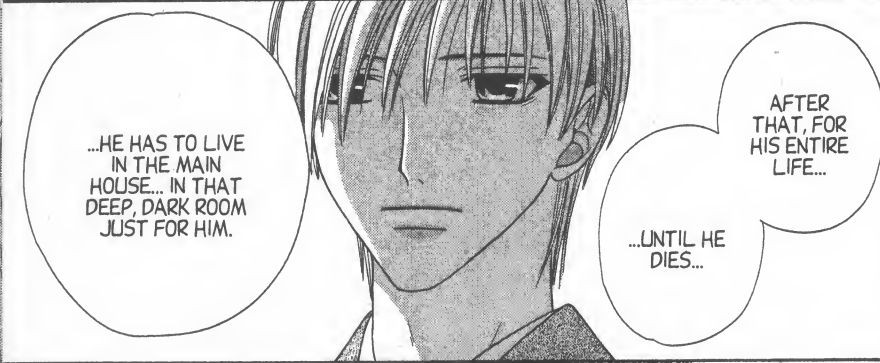




KYO IS BEING
GIVEN AN
EXTRAORDINARY
AMOUNT OF
FREEDOM...

THE CAT
NEEDS TO BE
CONFINED.

...BUT THAT
WILL END
WHEN HE
GRADUATES
HIGH SCHOOL.



...HE HAS TO LIVE
IN THE MAIN
HOUSE... IN THAT
DEEP, DARK ROOM
JUST FOR HIM.

AFTER
THAT, FOR
HIS ENTIRE
LIFE...

...UNTIL HE
DIES...



KAZUMA-DONO...
WHEN THE
TIME COMES,
WE NEED YOUR
COOPERATION.

WE CAN'T
LET HIM
GET AWAY!

HE WON'T BE
ALLOWED
OUTSIDE
ANYMORE.

LIKE YOUR
GRANDFATHER,
HE WON'T EVEN
BE ALLOWED TO
MARRY. ALONE
HIS WHOLE LIFE,
AS THE CAT
DESERVES.

THAT
THING IS A
MONSTER!!

WHEN I THINK OF
THAT THING LIVING
OUTSIDE AS IT DOES
NOW, I GET ANXIOUS.
THAT THING...

A MONSTER
WHO IT'S
PRACTICALLY
A FACT KILLED
HIS OWN
MOTHER...
WHO KILLED
MY WIFE!!

HE STILL
HAS ANOTHER
YEAR BEFORE
GRADUATION--

JOLT!

I'M
ANXIOUS!!

EVEN
SO...

...IT'S
A LITTLE
EARLY TO BE
DISCUSSING
THIS.

WHY IS
SUCH A THING
ALLOWED
TO LIVE?!

WHY?!

B-BUT
THAT THING
DOESN'T
EVEN HAVE
A SHRED OF
GUILT.

I'LL...I'LL
NEVER
FORGIVE IT.
MY WIFE...

...IT KILLED MY
WIFE...AND...
ALL THE PAIN
I'VE HAD TO
ENDURE.



YOU
RESEMBLE
HIM.

IT'S THAT
THING'S
FAULT...
AND YET...

IT'S ALL
THAT
THING'S
FAULT.

IT'S THAT
THING'S FAULT
EVERYTHING
FELL APART.



BUT THAT
BOY...

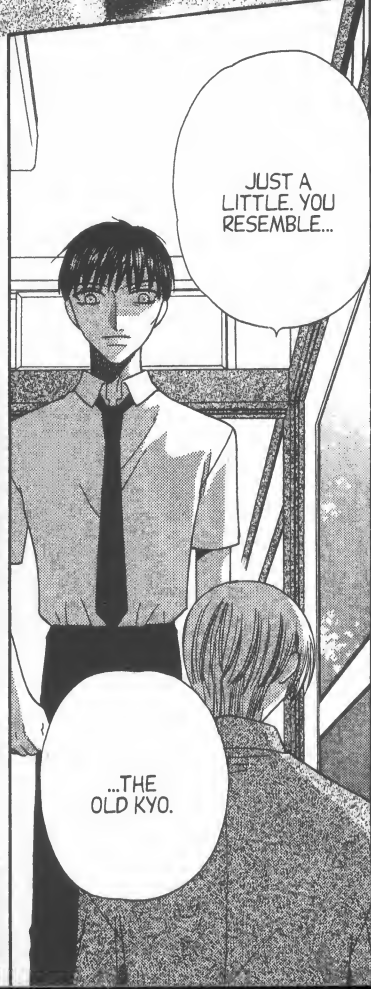
...IS
CHANGING.

HE HAS
FINALLY...

UNABLE TO
BEAR HIS
ANXIETIES
AND FEARS...

...HE WOULD
STOP HIS
EARS AND
CLOSE HIS
EYES...

...AND
FORCE
THEM ONTO
OTHER
PEOPLE.



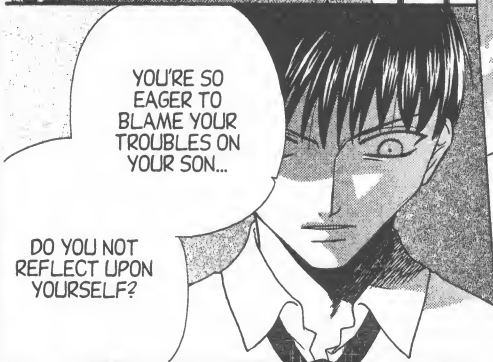
JUST A
LITTLE. YOU
RESEMBLE...

...THE
OLD KYO.



MAYBE
IT'S
TIME...

...THAT YOU
GREW UP,
TOO.



YOU'RE SO
EAGER TO
BLAME YOUR
TROUBLES ON
YOUR SON...

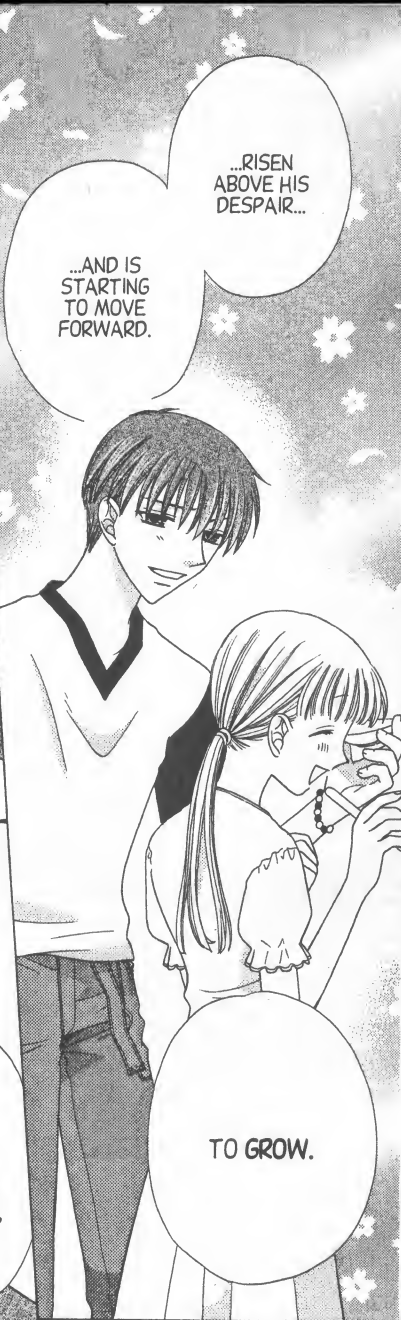
DO YOU NOT
REFLECT UPON
YOURSELF?



...YOU
CRY FOR
RESPITE?

ARE YOU
AFRAID OF
THE BLOOD
THAT MIGHT
BE ON YOUR
OWN HANDS?

IS THAT
WHY...



...RISEN
ABOVE HIS
DESPAIR...

...AND IS
STARTING
TO MOVE
FORWARD.

TO GROW.



BUT I KNOW
WHAT YOU'RE
ABOUT. YOU
JUST TOOK
THAT THING IN
FOR THE MONEY!


A-ARE YOU
TRYING TO SAY
IT'S ALL MY
FAULT?!

ANYONE
WHO RAISES
A MEMBER OF
THE ZODIAC,
EVEN IF IT IS
THE CAT, IS
SET FOR LIFE!

Ha!

YOU TALK AS
IF YOU'RE HIS
FATHER!

I AM ASKING
HOW YOU COME
TO BLAME HIM
FOR EVERY-
THING.



I COULD NOT
POSSIBLY
HELP YOU TO
CONFINE HIM.

NO MATTER
HOW MUCH
YOU HATE
HIM...

...I AM HAPPY
TO SEE HIM
GROW.



I WOULD
PROTECT
KYO SINGLE-
HANDEDLY
IF I HAD TO.

I DON'T
CARE
WHO IS
AGAINST
ME.

H-HOW
DARE YOU!

THE HEAD OF
THE FAMILY
WON'T BE HAPPY
WHEN HE HEARS
ABOUT THIS!



THAT IS MY
HUMBLE
OPINION.

YOU, WHO
CANNOT
HAVE THE
HEART OF A
PARENT...

...WOULD
NEVER
UNDERSTAND.



YOU THINK
YOU CAN
GET AWAY
WITH THIS?



YOU THINK
YOU CAN
STOP THIS?!

"HE WON'T
BE ALLOWED
OUTSIDE..."

UNTIL HE
DIES.



KYO HIMSELF
PROBABLY
REALIZES THE
FUTURE THAT
HAS BEEN
PREPARED
FOR HIM.

I DON'T
WANT TO
MAKE HIM
STAND IN
THAT
DARKNESS
...

...EVER
AGAIN.

I HAVE NO
DESIRE TO
SEND HIM
BACK.

I SAID...

I HATE THE
OCEAN AND
SWIMMING
POOLS!

I'd get
wet.

THE
SCENT OF
DARKNESS
I FELT
BACK
THEN..

...IS HERE,
AMONG THE
SOHMA, AS
WELL.



THEIR HEARTS
STAGNATE
OPPRESSIVELY.



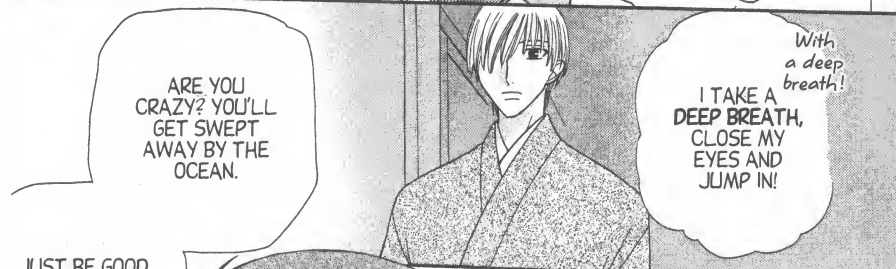
CAN YOU
EVEN SWIM,
ANYWAY?

PLEASE
LEAVE IT TO ME!
I JUST HAVE
TO REMEMBER
HOW TO DO THE
BREATHING!

Huh
?!

HOW DO YOU
SWIM IF
YOU CAN'T
BREATHE?

clench



ARE YOU
CRAZY? YOU'LL
GET SWEEP
AWAY BY THE
OCEAN.

With
a deep
breath!

I TAKE A
DEEP BREATH,
CLOSE MY
EYES AND
JUMP IN!

JUST BE GOOD
AND MAKE A
SAND CASTLE
OR SOMETHING.



HA
HA!

It's

Okay

I will



WELCOME
BACK!

I'M
HOME.

SHISHOU!

WHAT TOOK
YOU SO LONG?
WE'RE TIRED
OF WAITING.



THEY WILL
NOT TOUCH
YOU AS
LONG AS I'M
AROUND.

pat

YOU STILL
HAVE A
LONG WAY
TO GO...



WAS THERE
A PROBLEM?

YES...
I SUPPOSE
SO.

I HAD
TO LISTEN
TO SOME
TIRESOME
COMPLAINTS.

I WILL
PROTECT
YOU.

YES!
THAT'S
WHY WE
WERE
WAITING!

BUT
NOW THAT
I'M BACK, IS
THE CURRY
READY?

WELL THEN,
SHALL WE
EAT LUNCH?



.....
?

WHAT?





Chapter 53



NOT BLAH, BLAH, BLAH 5

The clothes Momitchi wears starting on the next page were designed by Mari Hidaka*-sensei. She sent me a fax that she drew of Momitchi that was **sooo** cute that I melted, so I got permission to let him actually wear the clothes in the manga. The original fax is actually **much** cuter. Long sleeves and boots... I'm sorry... It's the best I could do!

Anyway, very many thanks, Hidaka-sensei.

*manga-ka of the series VB Rose.



GET READY
FOR SOME VA-
VA-VOOM!!

TOMORROW,
WE SET
OUT WITH
A BOOM!!



Welcome!

Ja~

WE ALL
PROMISED
THAT WE'D GO
OUT AND DO
SOMETHING
TOGETHER!

AND WHAT
IS THIS "VA-
VA-VOOM"
NONSENSE?

WHAT ARE
YOU UP TO,
BARGING IN HERE
WITH TALK OF
"SETTING OUT"?

TO Morrow?!
SUMMER
HOME?! HISHO,
YOU SAY?!



MAKING
PLANS ON
HIS OWN
AGAIN...



I made
no such
promise.

SO STARTING
TOMORROW,
WE'RE ALL
GOING ON A
FANTASTIC
HISHO*
VACATION!

AND THEN,
I RENTED
A SOHMA
SUMMER
HOME!



UH,
UM, BUT
IT'S TOO
EXTRA-
VAGANT!

TOHRU, YOU'RE
TAKING TIME
OFF FROM WORK,
RIGHT? IF WE'RE
GOING TO GO
DO SOMETHING,
NOW'S OUR
CHANCE!

Sensei,
your tea
is ready.

Sensei,
your
schedule
for today.



WHAT'S HE
DREAMING
ABOUT THIS
TIME?

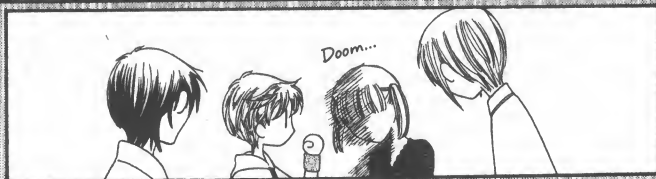
That
sounds
nice.
Hisho...

A HISHO
VACATION
HM?

*hisho can mean
either "going to
a summer resort"
or "personal
secretary."







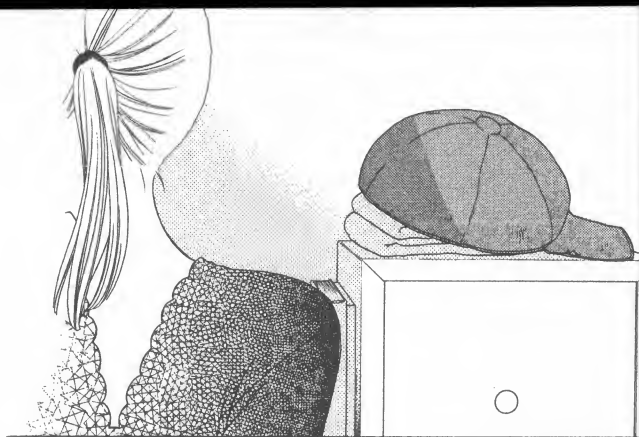
サアアア...



Yuki and Momiji finished early.







Fruits Basket 9
Part 6

The "Rain Shelter of Terror" that starts on page 181 is something I drew for the **Fruits Basket Special Edition Magazine**. It was a wonderful publication that even had interviews with the anime voice actors! (By the way, they're not selling it anymore.) The drawings were the first I'd done in a year after my recovery, so you can see in them how happy I was to be able to draw. That's how I see them.



WE'RE GOING
ON A TRIP
TOMORROW,
SO GET READY,
OKAY!!

YOU DON'T
UNDERSTAND
AT ALL!



YUP!
♡

TO A
SUMMER
HOME?!

WAIT...

TOMORROW?



KYO HIT
ME!

U
A
A

A
A
H!

DON'T
"YUP"
ME!

THERE YOU GO,
JUST MAKING UP
PLANS WITHOUT
ASKING ANYONE
AGAIN!



TOHRU
WOULD BE SO
DISAPPOINTED
IF YOU DIDN'T
COME.

SHUT
UP...

LET'S PLAY
TOGETHER!
LET'S SWIM
TOGETHER!

It'll be
fun!



RIGHT?!



But, but!

KYO'S
COMING WITH
US, RIGHT?!

YOU WON'T
SAY YOU
DON'T WANT
TO, RIGHT?



Sheesh....

I TELL HIM
I'M TIRED, AND
HE MAKES ME
GET READY
FOR A TRIP?

カ
ッ
コ
ッ

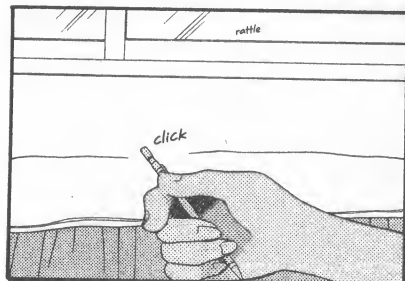
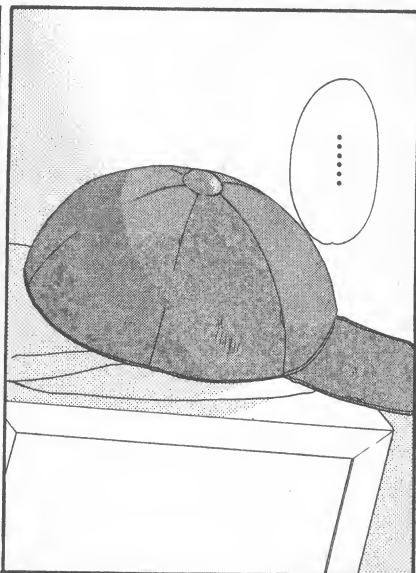


HEY, HEY,
KYO!

I TOLD
YOU TO
SHUT UP.

I NEVER
SAID I DIDN'T
WANT TO.









WHY DID YOU
KEEP IT? IT'S
SO... WORN OUT.

...AND
I DON'T EVEN
REMEMBER
WHAT HE
LOOKED LIKE.

*My memory
is hazy.*

I DON'T
KNOW WHO
OR WHERE
HE IS...

BECAUSE IT'S
A PRECIOUS
MEMORY.

...THAT HE
HELPED ME.

BECAUSE
I REALLY
WAS...

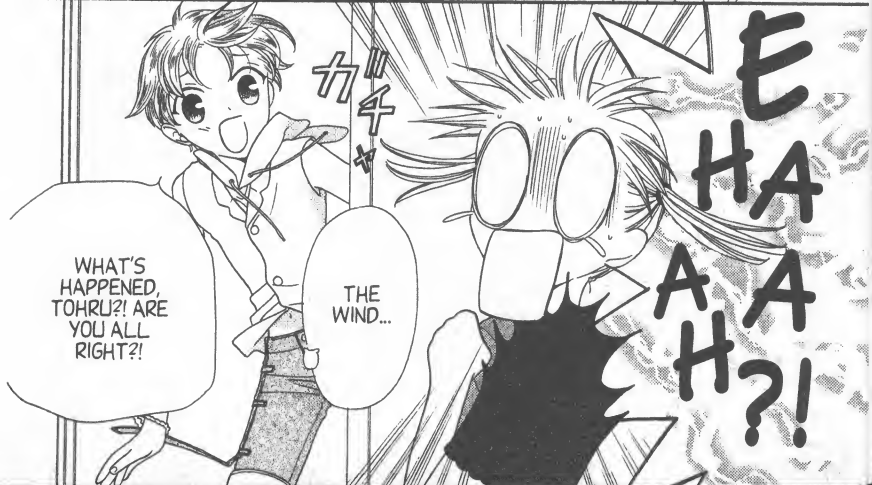
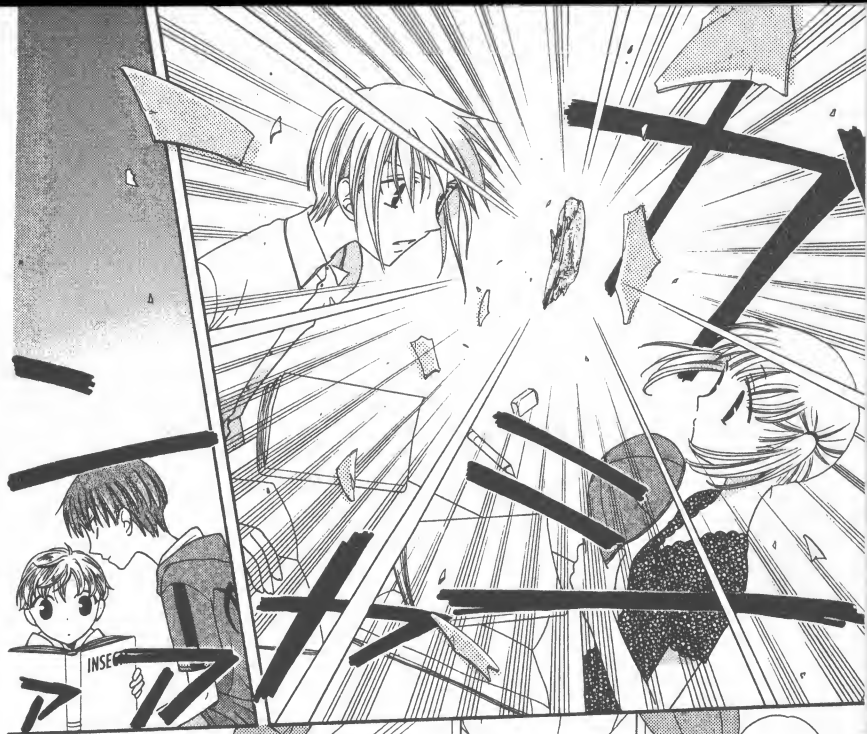
...VERY
HAPPY...



EVEN

...IF YOU DO
FORGET."

HOND...





TH-TH-THE
GLASS! THE
GLASS!

WE KNOW.
CALM
DOWN.

YOU'RE
NOT HURT,
ARE YOU?

FOR NOW,
WE HAVE
TO CLOSE
THIS UP.

IT'S
DANGEROUS,
HONDA-SAN.
YOU SHOULD
WAIT OUT-
SIDE.

I-I-I'm
all right!
I'll
help!

ST-
STOP
...?

STOP, O
MIGHTY
WIND! I
COMMAND
YOU!

YOU MORON.
YOU THINK
THAT WOULD
STOP IT?!







FOR YOUR
INFORMATION...



...I WASN'T
THE ONE...

...WHO
BROKE THE
GLASS.



I KNOW.



LONG TIME
NO SEE.

OH, AND
CONGRATULATIONS
ON LEAVING THE
HOSPITAL...

...RIN.





ANSWER
ME...

...GURE-
NII.



WELL...

DO I
KNOW?



I DON'T KNOW
IF I CAN LIVE
UP TO YOUR
EXPECTATIONS.

ANSWER
ME.



NO, YOU
DON'T.

HA!



...

I WONDER...

DO I LOOK
LIKE I'M THAT
SIMPLE?



OR IS THAT
FOOLISHNESS
PART OF
YOUR PLAN?

NOW
THEN...

SO, WHAT?

ARE
YOU JUST
STUPID?

HOW SHALL
WE BEGIN?



THANK YOU
SO MUCH!

IT'S NO
PROBLEM.

But...

YOU CAN'T
SLEEP HERE
TONIGHT,
CAN YOU?

AH!

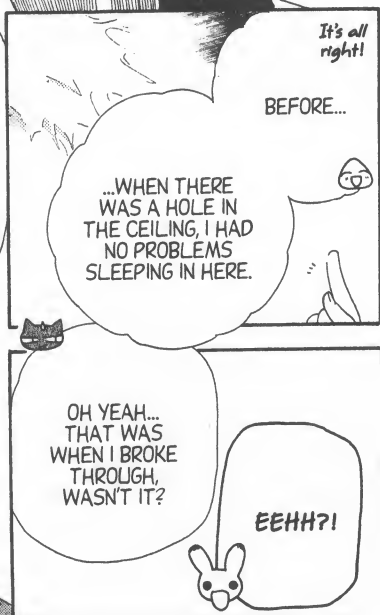
THE WIND
HAS DIED
DOWN.



Uwaahh!
That's
so rude!

KYO DID
SOMETHING SO
EXTREMELY
SENSELESS?!

YOU'RE
THE LAST ONE
I WANNA HEAR
THAT FROM!



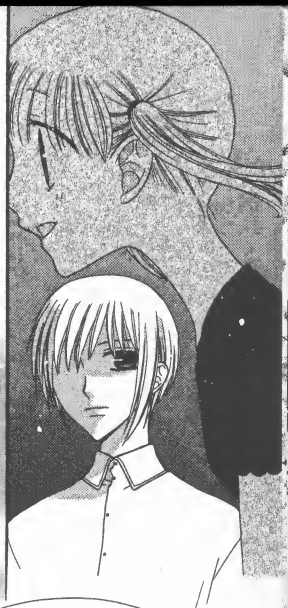
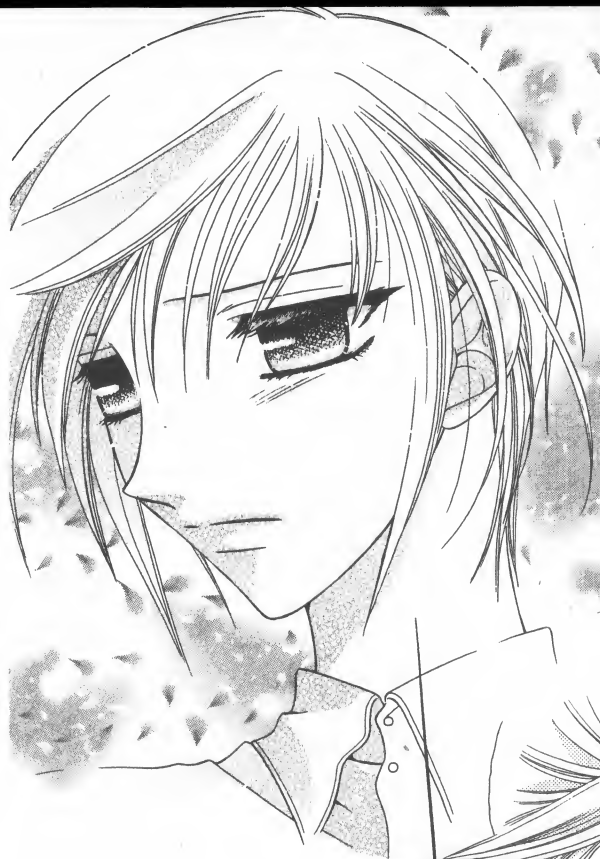
It's all
right!

BEFORE...

...WHEN THERE
WAS A HOLE IN
THE CEILING, I HAD
NO PROBLEMS
SLEEPING IN HERE.

OH YEAH...
THAT WAS
WHEN I BROKE
THROUGH,
WASN'T IT?

EEHH?!



WHAT WILL
HAPPEN...

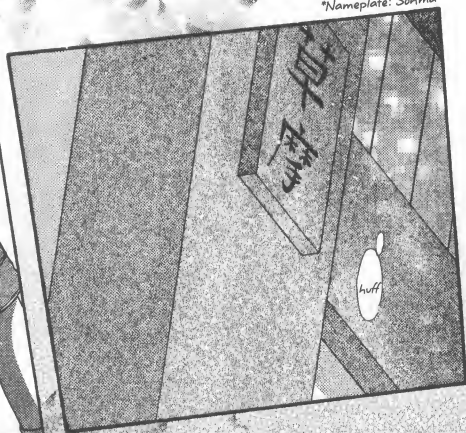
"BECAUSE IT'S
A PRECIOUS
MEMORY."

...WHEN
I OPEN...



...THE
CLOSED
LID?

*Nameplate: Sohma





WHAT
WILL BE
GAINED?

WHAT
WILL BE
LOST?

To Be Continued in Volume 10...

RAIN SHELTER OF TERROR

IT'S AN EVENING
SHOWER, SO IF WE
WAIT A WHILE, IT
SHOULD PASS.

I DON'T
CARE...

JUST
MAKE IT
STOP.

rain

SHEESH.

WHAT'S
WITH THE
DOWNPOUR
OUT OF
NOWHERE?

rain

rain



jitter joy
joy jitter
jitter joy

YOU KNOW!
I READ AN
INTERESTING
SCARY BOOK!

SUMMER'S BEST
FOR TELLING
BLOOD-BURGLING
SCARY STORIES!

jitter

YOU
MEAN
BLOOD-
GIRDLING.

WILL
YOU TWO
SHUT UP?!

You're both saying
it wrong!

LET'S
TELL
SCARY
STORIES!!

HYAH
?!



EH?

I DON'T
MIND...

BUT ISN'T
THERE SOME-
ONE HERE WHO
DOESN'T LIKE
THEM?

No it
isn't...

WILL YOU
LISTEN,
YUKI?

WHAT'S
WRONG WITH
SOME SCARY
STORIES?

IT'S THE
PERFECT
WAY TO
KILL TIME.

SHE REALLY
LOOKS LIKE
SHE CAN'T
HANDLE IT...

B-B-B-B-
BRING
IT ON.

N-N-N-NO,
I'M ALL
RIGHT.

EH?

WHY HIDE IT?
I DON'T LIKE
SCARY STORIES
EITHER...

WHA
?!

EEHH?!

IF TOHRU
DOESN'T LIKE
IT, WE WON'T
DO IT.

N-N-NO, YOU
MUSTN'T.
IT'S OKAY,
REALLY!

HEY, HEY,
TOHRU.

YOU DON'T
HAVE TO
PUSH YOUR-
SELF.

THAT'S
RIGHT,
TOHRU-
KUN...





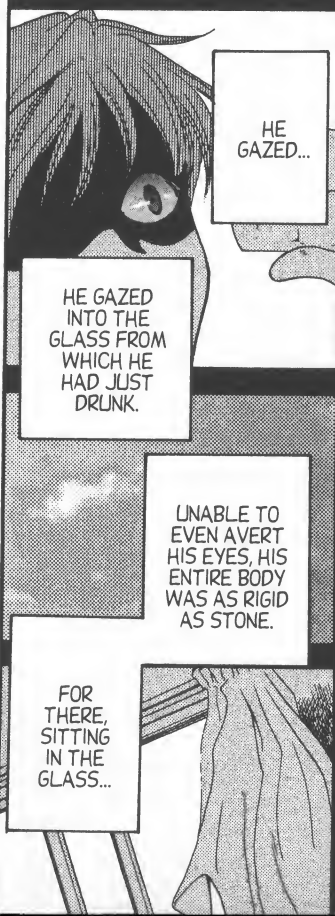


WAS HE
PLANNING
THIS ALL
ALONG...?

YOU'RE
TELLING
IT?!

IT WAS A
SWELTERING
SUMMER
AFTERNOON...

OKAY THEN,
LET'S START!

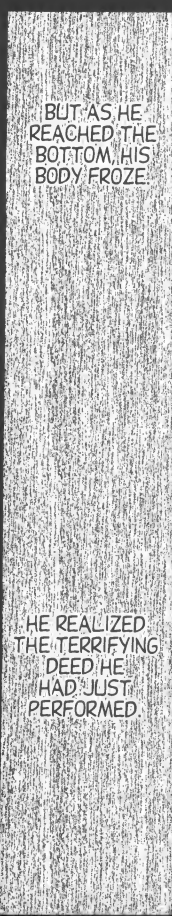


HE
GAZED...

HE GAZED
INTO THE
GLASS FROM
WHICH HE
HAD JUST
DRUNK.

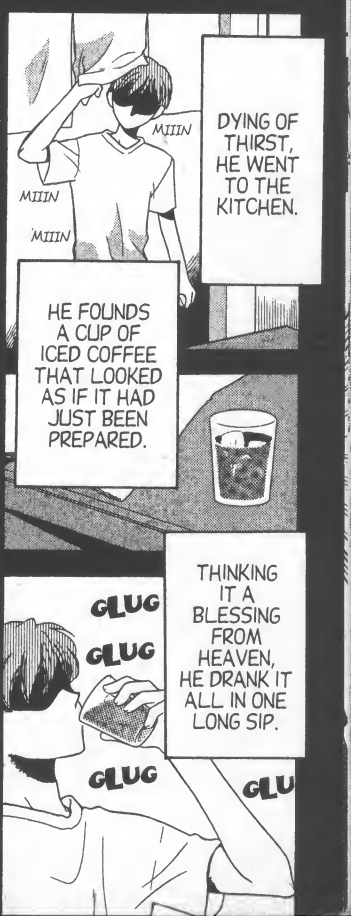
UNABLE TO
EVEN AVERT
HIS EYES, HIS
ENTIRE BODY
WAS AS RIGID
AS STONE.

FOR
THERE,
SITTING
IN THE
GLASS...



BUT AS HE
REACHED THE
BOTTOM, HIS
BODY FROZE.

HE REALIZED
THE TERRIFYING
DEED HE
HAD JUST
PERFORMED.



DYING OF
THIRST,
HE WENT
TO THE
KITCHEN.

HE FOUNDS
A CUP OF
ICED COFFEE
THAT LOOKED
AS IF IT HAD
JUST BEEN
PREPARED.

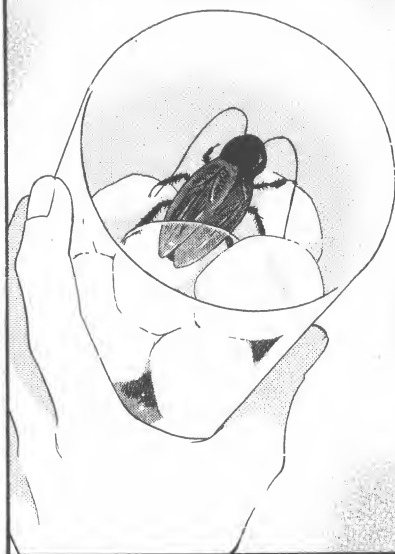
THINKING
IT A
BLESSING
FROM
HEAVEN,
HE DRANK IT
ALL IN ONE
LONG SIP.

GLUG

GLUG

GLUG

GLU



...WAS A
SINGLE
BLACK
COCKROACH!



E
W
W
W
!!

WHOA,
SCARY!!
THAT'S THE
SCARIEST
STORY
I'VE EVER
HEARD!!

THE NEXT
CHAPTER
IS A STORY
ABOUT GRATED
CHEESE.

STOP IT!
DON'T TELL
ANY MORE!



Next time in...



Dog Days of Summer...

Tohru and the Sohmas are spending time at the Sohma family's summer-house, but it's not all fun in the sun on this little trip. Akito pays a surprise visit, causing a commotion for the rest of the family. At the summer house. Shigure takes a trip down memory lane with an old friend, remembering the days when Hatori wasn't so aloof. Meanwhile, Tohru starts thinking--what must life be like for the parents and lovers of a cursed member of the Sohma family? Can life with this family truly be happy while bearing such a burden?

Fruits Basket Volume 10
Available July 2005

Slithery Narcissism

Snake

Years: 1941, 1953, 1965, 1977, 1989, 2001, 2013, 2025, 2037

Qualities: Romantic, Clever, Discreet, Refined, Intelligent

Grievances: Vain, Procrastinator, Hot-Tempered

Suitable Jobs: Teacher, Philosopher, Writer, Psychiatrist, Fortune Teller

Compatible With: Ox, Rooster

Must Avoid: Boar

Ruling Hours: 9 AM to 11 AM

Season: Spring

Ruling Month: May

Sign Direction: South-Southwest

Fixed Element: Fire

Corresponding Western Sign: Taurus

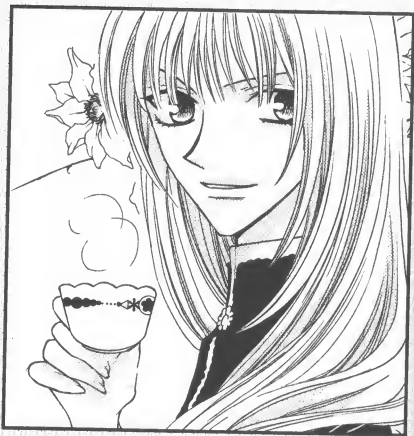
Throughout the ages, Snakes have gotten the short end of the stick and made out to be villains like the Great Kaa in *The Jungle Book* or the fabled serpent in the Garden of Eden. However, the Chinese Zodiac sees any negative traits in the Snake as it would any of the other animal's dual natures--as yin and yang.

A person born in the Year of the Snake is endowed with great wisdom and even greater beauty. Like Ayame Sohma, fellow Snakes are very sure of themselves, but also incredibly vain and they like to flaunt what they have. Money comes easily for a Snake, but try to get a Snake to loan a friend a few bucks and their stingy nature rears its ugly head. The key to getting Snakes to crack open their wallet is to catch their sympathy. If they see someone that is in need or less fortunate than they are, then they collapse like a house of cards.

Snakes tend to overdo it when it comes to their jobs and prefer to control rather than lead. This is mainly due to Snakes always striving for the

as held on as that changes
bruary 6 and anyone born

Year of the Snake:



limelight. Though heartless at times, Snakes choose their words very carefully and speak them in a listless, yet cautious manner. Depending on the situation and the amount of pressure placed upon them, Snakes will either try to lighten up an atmosphere with jokes or emit an icy exterior to stare down the grim tidings.

Women born under this sign are very quiet and serene individuals, but mainly because they prefer to let their appearance do the talking. Female Snakes prefer to dress to impress and only wear the finest in clothing and jewelry. Friends are also chosen with a Snake's own self as the key frame of reference as they prefer to gravitate towards those who are like-minded and trustworthy. Best of all, relationships with Snakes are always filled with passion and romance.

Celebrity Snakes:

James Van Der Beek

Kim Basinger

Björk

Sarah Michelle Gellar

Ludacris

Chris Martin

John Mayer

Tom Welling

* Note: It is important to know what day Chinese New Year's was and what Zodiac animal you are. Example: 1989 actually began on Feb. 11, 1989. Before that date is actually a Dragon.